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**THE PLACE OF BOOKS  
IN THE LIFE WE LIVE**

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**WILLIAM L. STIDGER**



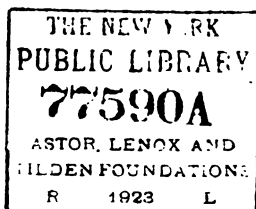


# THE PLACE OF BOOKS IN THE LIFE WE LIVE

BY  
WILLIAM L. <sup>Roy</sup>STIDGER  
AUTHOR OF "THERE ARE SERMONS IN BOOKS,"  
"FLASH-LIGHTS FROM THE SEVEN SEAS,"  
"STANDING ROOM ONLY," ETC.

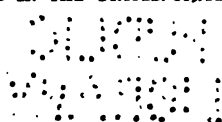
WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY  
BISHOP WILLIAM FRASER McDOWELL

NEW  YORK  
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THE PLACE OF BOOKS IN THE LIFE WE LIVE. I  
PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



DEDICATED TO  
OUR DEAR FRIENDS IN CALIFORNIA  
DR. MARK AND HAZEL HOPKINS  
AND TO THEIR TRIO OF CHILDREN:  
FORREST,  
ANNABEL,  
FLOY.

Wawa. 16 Jan. 1923



A WORD OF INTRODUCTION FROM  
BISHOP WILLIAM FRASER  
McDOWELL

When I went to college, now several years ago, a wise man told me some things about my necessary outfit. To be sure I had provided what clothing was needed for the simple days of that far gone period. The clothes were not very fine, nor did they fit very well. They were built for use and not for show or decoration. But they harmonized fairly well with the rest of the sartorial scenery then prevalent in a college that did not in the whole range of it, from president to "prep," own a dress suit. But this wise man gave no advice about clothes. He took them for granted. He did not even advise about food. He took that for granted. It could be done in those simple inexpensive times. He gave counsel about books. Thereby he showed that he was wise. He told me, among other things, to buy Porter's "Books and Reading," and "every book like it that appears hereafter." And I did what he told me to do, as far as possible. The principles stated by Porter are good to this day. The lists, of

course, are not up to date. A dozen other books, larger and smaller, on "Best Books," "The Choice of Books," and similar titles are among my treasures. They have gone a long way toward saving my life from forgetting the place and use of all sorts of good books. And I have been disposed to pity this generation which surely has no such wise guides and advisers!

And I used to talk to audiences, when they could be gathered together, on "What to read" and "How to read it," talk to them seriously and earnestly as of a vital matter, talk as one who had a large idea of "The Place of Books in the Life We Live." The addresses were full of the wise sayings, the sage advice, the suggestive lists of those other men whose counsels were so good and valuable. And in the Annual Conferences the practice has been continued, though not nearly so faithfully as it ought to have been. Still I have kept on advising ministers everywhere to obey dear Austin Phelps' advice, "Wear the old coat but buy the new book." For frankly I do not see how congregations live at all with a ministry that does not care more for books than it does for clothes or cars. And a ministry is not touching a community with power at all unless it is all the time introducing it to the noblest literature of life, showing the community what it is and awakening a desire to know it. Of course a ministry that

does not itself know this cannot do it. Nor can it in the long run do very much else.

A person who introduces a life-giving book to another person is rendering a large and lasting service to that person. Part of the joy of going over one's books is the pleasure of remembering the person who called attention to them. My library is fairly alive as this suggestion is written down, with memories of men who advised me to buy this or that volume standing within reach and showing signs of use. Every day the Chief Justice of the United States honors our block by walking through it on his way to the Supreme Court. It is something to remember that one night years ago, on Lincoln's birthday, Senator Dolliver introduced me to Roosevelt, and he in turn presented me to Secretary Taft. It was a rich and significant night. But here stands a real book that Bashford told me thirty years ago to buy and master, and the book itself led to others that stand near it. And this kind of introduction has a place all its own. Honestly, the thought of it is overcrowding the room in which these lines are being written.

Now, my friend, the Rev. Dr. Stidger (though his close friends do not call him that), is the most diligent and attractive introducer of books to people and people to books that I am acquainted with. He knows books, ancient and modern; he knows



people, old and young. He loves all the books that are good and all the people who are or ought to be or are in process of becoming good. All this makes him an authority. And he does this introducing with consummate art and genuine affection. He does not do it without due appreciation of its meaning. This, to him, is not a common transaction, but a high and sacred ceremony, "to be entered into reverently, discreetly and in the fear of God." Knowing what a book may do for a man or a woman, he brings books and people together as a part of that good ministry which does all things for the sake of Christ. He knows, of course, and knows well that for the uses and purposes of life, the Book of books is in a place of its own. He wants it to have not an unreal but a real place. So he does this special preaching along with other kinds. So he gets people and books together, along with other good things he does. So he never forgets that he is a minister of the Word of God to the children of God as he tries to open the gates of life and make plain the paths of life by using the books of life in his ministry.

W. F. McD.

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Bishop's Residence,  
2107 Wyoming Avenue,  
Washington, D. C.*

## FOREWORD

**Books are like the windows of a great tower. They let light in.**

Every life is a growing tower. It is put up stone by stone. The higher it grows, the darker it gets if we do not put in a window here and there to give light. That is what a book does to a life. It lets light into that life.

Some lives are so dark that the folks who live them, grope up the winding stairs, dust-covered and gloomy, because there are no windows and consequently, there is not light.

The preacher discovers this true about homes. He goes into all types of homes. The people in the average home are starving for books. We are growing up in this age with what I call a "Motion Picture Mind." We must read, we must urge others to read; we who are preachers, parents, teachers, editors; we who in any degree have the responsibility of leadership.

I am frank to say that this is the reason I have written this book. It is because I have seen the shallowness in the lives of children, and the poor empty shelves of the bookcases in the average American home.

The piano is loaded down with cheap songs; filthy in sex suggestiveness; and the few books that one sees are of the same type as the cheap songs.

When I look into the average book-shelves of the average American home, I think of Old Mother Hubbard's Cupboard and that well known child verse:

"Old Mother Hubbard  
Went to the cupboard  
To get her poor dog a bone;  
But when she got there  
The cupboard was bare  
And so the poor dog had none."

My hope is that this book will be an urge to men of my profession to awaken in the hearts of their folks a love for good books. No preacher can have a more lasting ministry than the Ministry of Books. This does not mean that he will neglect his Evangelic Ministry. It means that he will enhance it with books.

Books plow the soil for an evangelistic campaign. Let anybody get to reading great spiritual messages in books and they are ready for the great challenge from the Gospel.

As I have shown in the following pages of this volume, a book is frequently the turning point

in the life of a boy or a girl. A book will frequently turn the whole course of the river of human life. A book will awaken a soul as nothing else. Many a preacher, if he looks back, will remember how some great book changed his entire hopes, ambitions and outlook on life.

Books will remake any man's ministry. Books will add fifty per cent. to a teacher's efficiency and to his or her usefulness to human lives. Books will bind parents and children together with "hoops of steel." Books will make an editor's pen more virile and more commanding. Books will lift any man's personal and professional life to higher heights. The average every-day American, whether he himself reads or not, has a deep and an abiding respect for the man who does.

Books will "Bulge Back the World's Horizons"; books will give "The Big Boost"; books will be the keys that will open the gates of the Kingdoms of the earth and Eternity; books will "Keep the Soul of the World Alive"; books will lift life to higher heights!

Read books!

Urge books upon others!

Give books as gifts to friends!

Broaden your own horizons with books!

Let the light into the tower of your soul through books!

Give God and the spiritual forces a chance in your life by keeping company with the great souls of earth through books!

**WILLIAM L. STIDGER.**

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## **I: KEYS TO THE KINGDOM**



## BOOKS ARE KEYS

Here are the *Golden* keys:  
Books of the Seven Seas;  
Keys to the Kingdoms wide  
Where far adventures hide.

Here are the *Silver* keys  
That unlock mysteries  
Old as the happy smiles  
In the romance of southern aisles.

Here are the *Iron* keys  
Unlocking the destinies  
Of ocean, earth and sky  
Where Eagles float and fly.

Here are the great *Bronze* keys  
Of old mythologies  
Which open wide the door  
Where gods have gone before.

Here are the *Jeweled* keys  
Which one may turn with ease;  
Old books with marks and stains;  
Old books with slumbering flames.

# THE PLACE OF BOOKS IN THE LIFE WE LIVE

## CHAPTER I

### *Keys to the Kingdom*

#### THE PLACE OF BOOKS IN THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT

According to Dr. Lynn Harold Hough's interpretation of an experience of Alice, the Wonderland girl, one day she saw a strange object that had hands and feet and a lock for a head.

This lock was running about frantically searching for something. It was never still a single minute. Its restlessness to find something attracted the attention of Alice. It ran around like a chicken with its head cut off. There seemed to be no direction to its actions.

I have seen men everywhere like this.

I have seen parents upon whose souls had fallen the great responsibility and privilege of determining the contour of a young life, floundering about like that poor lock.

I have read Editorial writers who seemed to be floundering about, going this way and that, frantically searching for something and seeming to find it not; with a great deal of desperate striving and struggling but getting no place and leading nobody anywhere.

Alice couldn't stand it any longer. She felt sorry for this big lock for it seemed so eager to get some place and to do something and to find something.

So she said to this lock, "Whatever is the matter with you? Are you crazy? Why do you run about like that looking behind everything; searching in every nook and corner? Why do you lift up every leaf and flower and piece of moss and stone?"

"I am searching for something that is very important to me."

"For what are you searching, Mr. Lock?" asked Alice.

"I am searching for a key to unlock myself with. I have feet and arms and legs and hands and a head, but I must find the key to unlock myself or I shall never be able to do anything worth while in the world."

Books are the Keys that will unlock our Kingdoms.

Let every teacher, parent, preacher, editor know this: that Books are the Keys which will

unlock the soul of a child or a youth or a grown-up.

That is the theme of this book from beginning to end.

This story of Alice in Wonderland has given me the vehicle that I have long desired. This story expresses all that books mean to life. They are the Keys that unlock the Kingdoms of Life. Each book is a Key to open a different gate in these great Kingdoms.

I remember a brilliant business man whom I knew in California. His name was Robert Mobbs. He was one of the keenest minds I ever knew. I used to buy groceries from him. I was his preacher.

Many a time I have gone into his store to buy potatoes when that rascal of a man would forget that he was a grocer and begin to quote poetry to me. He would start with the old church hymns. Then he would go to Shakespeare. He could quote entire pages of these great poems, hymns and Shakespearean plays; entire Cantos of Milton; Tennyson's "In Memoriam" and "The Idyls of the King" without stopping.

People would come into the store. He would continue to quote poetry to me because he found in me a sympathetic audience.

The people would stand back and smile. I

have seen as many as twenty people gather in that store waiting to be served while the owner continued to quote poetry.

Then he would suddenly stop and with a most gracious smile and apology to his customers say "Excuse me! Excuse me, please! Whenever the Preacher comes in, I get to quoting poetry to him and forget where I am. I am sorry!"

Then forgetting the world of idealism, he would turn like a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde to the prosaic task of waiting on the people who wanted such commonplace things as lard, and butter and eggs and potatoes.

But the wonder of it was that he was always able in the flash of a second to sweep his soul away from the commonplace things of the material world and walk with the great souls of all time even up and down the floors of a grocery store.

It is a very easy thing for a Poet like Joyce Kilmer to go into a Delicatessen Shop and write poetry about that shop on a wager; but it is a more wonderful thing even than that; when the shopkeeper himself can live poetry even while dealing with the mundane things of earth.

"Where under the sun did you learn all of that Shakespeare?" I asked him one day.

The tears came into his blue eyes.

Then he glanced up with a look of light and

reverence in his face and said "From my sister. She used to take me, when I was a boy about five years of age. We would go out under an apple tree and there she would teach me the great hymns and the Bible and Shakespeare. It was easy for me to memorize those great musical lines. I learned all the poetry I know before I was ten years of age. I have never forgotten what I learned from my sister under that old apple tree. She is gone now but she has enriched my life infinitely."

"Yes, that was a great gift she gave you."

"It is worth more to me than all the money I have ever made." And I knew this man to be a man of wealth. Yet, as he said those simple words, I felt a note of sincerity in his utterance which I knew to be characteristic of the man.

Oscar Kuhns in "A One-Sided Autobiography" when he is telling what books meant to his life as a child says:

"Longfellow, Tennyson, Swinburne, Keats and Byron were my favorite poets then. Browning, Wordsworth, Matthew Arnold came later. One Summer I spent almost entirely in Shakespeare. I went over them three times that Summer, once to get the plot and the swing; then to look up meanings of obscure expressions; and, thirdly, to commit to memory the great passages. Many of

the lines I then learned still linger in my memory,  
a blessing in many an hour since then, when,

“ ‘In the session of sweet silent thought  
I summon my remembrance of past years.’ ”

So it was and is and shall ever be that Books are the Keys that unlock Kingdoms of living and life and love to a child heart; unlock Kingdoms in which that child shall live forever and a day. A child becomes a habitat of Kingdoms; aye, becomes the King or the Queen in such Kingdoms; which would forever remain unknown to that child's soul were it not that a book, sometime, somewhere, in some magic moment unlocked the Kingdom for that child's soul.

“Come ye apart and enter into a new Kingdom every day!” cries a book to a child's soul.

“Come hither and let me be the key that will unlock the Kingdom of Thine own soul!” cries the Key of a Book to a child.

In John Masefield's “Hell-Hounds” the little birds are trying to tell the good Saint how he can conquer Evil:

“ ‘Open the doors, good Saint,’ they cried,  
‘Pass deeper to your soul;  
There is a spirit in your side  
That hell cannot control!’ ”

And one of the ways to get a child to "Pass deeper to its soul" is to open the doors of that little soul and Kingdom with the Key of a Book.

This same Dr. Kuhns speaks of how books and books alone are the Keys that open the Kingdoms of the Grown-up World.

"The literature of the nineteenth century was deeply impressed by three things: a new feeling for, and worship of nature; an apparently irreconcilable conflict between faith and doubt in religious matters, brought on by the wonderful revelation of science; and, thirdly, a new interest in man as man, however lowly his estate."

Here he suggests three great Kingdoms of the nineteenth century. The Kingdom of Nature; the Kingdom of Science; and the Kingdom of Man.

How shall we enter these Kingdoms? The doors are shut. We are rank outsiders. Our hearts hunger to explore these worlds; these reaches. Dr. Kuhns himself gives the answer:

"Just as the significance of Wordsworth lies in the fact that he sums up the whole spirit of modern nature-love; just as Tennyson and Browning sum up the religious doubt and struggles that mark the spirit of the mid-nineteenth century, finally coming out into the clear light of optimistic faith; so the significance of Dickens to me lies in



the fact that he sums up the sense of kindly and loving pity, of the brotherhood of all men."

Wordsworth, Tennyson, Browning and Dickens were the keys that unlocked the doors of these Ages and these Kingdoms.

A new trio may be found to unlock the same Kingdoms to-day.

John Muir and John Burroughs are the keys that will unlock the Kingdoms of the Nature World; Alfred Noyes and John Masefield are the keys that will unlock the Kingdoms of Faith; and Carl Sanburg, and Gibson are the keys that will unlock the Gates to the Kingdom of Man.

Biography is the key that will unlock many kingdoms to child and youth and age; to parent; teacher, preacher and editor.

Morley's "Life of Gladstone," Lord Tennyson's Life by his Son, "The Life and Letters of Browning," Bielschowsky's "Goethe," Kuhne-mann's "Schiller," Brander Matthews' "Molière," Ida M. Tarbell's "Life of Lincoln," "The Americanization of Edward Bok," "The Autobiography of Andrew Carnegie," "The Life and Letters of Theodore Roosevelt," "The Life of Queen Victoria," and a score of others will all open up new Kingdoms of Life.

And so I make bold to say that the parent who wishes to unlock the soul of a child; the teacher

who wants to teach a child to explore new reaches; the editor who wishes even in a small way to fulfill his responsibility to his readers; the author who wishes to unlock the gates to new kingdoms for his readers; and the preacher who desires always and forever to add the thrill and the vitalizing effects of variety to his sermon; a preacher who wishes forever and always to lead his people into new kingdoms; these must remember the story of Alice in Wonderland and the lock that was hunting for a key to unlock itself.

No soul, be it child or youth or age will fully unlock its own kingdom until it has turned the Key of Books in the lock.

Beyond the swing of that door or gate lies the whole world.

Beyond the door of that Kingdom of a Human Soul lies Adventure.

Beyond the door lies Love.

Beyond the door of one's self lies God!

Unlock the door!

Swing back the gates to the kingdom of your own heart!

Pass deeper to your soul!

Your soul; any soul; a child's soul; Youth's soul; is like the Yosemite Valley.

As you pass up the Merced River toward Yosemite, that plunging tumbling stream is beautiful

in itself. But the farther up you get, the more beautiful it becomes. Finally, you sweep around old El Capitan and catch your first view of that ever widening wonderland, with its waterfalls, its Half-dome, its El Capitan, its background of snow-crowned mountain peaks; and you suddenly realize that the farther you go, the more wonderful it becomes. So it is with the Kingdom of a Human Soul.

Or a Human Soul is like a gold mine. You start in on a narrow level and a narrow tunnel. I visited the Imperial Mine in Grass Valley a while ago. After having mined this mine for fifty years, the owners took more gold out of it that year than they had taken out in all the previous years up to that time.

You go back into a gold mine. It branches out. It widens as you dig further and further in. It gets richer as you discover new lobes and veins. It is literally "Sweeter as the years go by." Richer, deeper, yellower gold comes forth. So is the Kingdom of a Human Soul.

Unlock a Human Soul and you have opened the Gates to Eternity!

Books are the Keys to this Kingdom!

And in the following chapters, I wish to speak of the place that Books have in the life that we live; the everyday life of home and school and church and business.

I wish to speak of what the use of these keys may mean to the preacher, to the parent, to the teacher, to the editor, to the business man; to everyone who cares for adventure ways through eternity.



## **II: THE MINISTRY OF BOOKS**

## GOD'S GOOD GIFT

"Give attention to reading. Read good things; any good book will gird your holy might, whether the book be history, biography, devotional literature, fiction, or poetry. Read noble thoughts, whoever wrote them. Authors are God's generous gifts to help us to the wider life. Use them and therein justify God's good gift. The poets have so many of them seen God that they will teach you how to see him. Flee the delusion that you are never studying God save when you are in church or reading the Bible. When you watch the sunrise you are watching one means of God's event for the world. Who gathers flowers, and revels in them, is studying and enjoying God's thoughts. Read nature, read books; but do not neglect nor forget THE ONE BOOK!"

*The Blessed Life*, BISHOP WILLIAM A. QUAYLE.

## CHAPTER II

### *The Ministry of Books*

#### THE PREACHER AND BOOKS IN THE LIFE WE LIVE

"The preacher who knows and lives in books is capable of a service to his people that will pay a hundredfold," said a preacher-pastor one day in my presence. He said it with a good deal of emphasis and feeling.

"Books? So you are a book preacher?" said another preacher in a slightly critical tone.

"Yes," said my friend: "a preacher of books and the Book."

A week before this conversation I had heard Helen Keller speak at a meeting of the Advertising Clubs, in Cleveland, Ohio. I was scheduled to speak immediately following her appearance. It was the most difficult speaking task I ever attempted.

The marvel, the miracle, the wonder of what Miss Sullivan had done for that blind, deaf and dumb girl swept me off my feet. I could not refrain from calling the attention of that great crowd of business men to Lincoln's words at



Gettysburg as he stood looking down upon the graves of thousands of American soldiers.

I said "As I stand up to speak to you, following as I do, the miracle of Helen Keller, I am aware of the fact that what I say, cannot speak as loudly as what Miss Sullivan has done."

It was a tense meeting because of that wonderful girl's presence. But perhaps the most beautiful moment of all was when Miss Sullivan permitted that crowd of business men to ask questions of Miss Keller.

One man said "Tell Miss Keller that I know her brother in the South." Miss Sullivan put Helen's two fingers to her own lips and Helen's thumb to her vibrant throat and conveyed the message.

Even before those words were spoken Helen's feet began to dance and her body to vibrate with ecstasy as she said "And are you an engineer also?"

Then somebody asked Helen what her favorite sport was.

She said with that peculiar and careful pronunciation "Horse-back ri-ding!"

Then Miss Sullivan asked Helen if she knew that the room was full of men.

She danced with excitement and said "Yes, I know."

"How do you know, Helen?"

"I can smell zem."

"How do you tell your men friends apart, Helen?"

"I smell zem."

The crowd roared with laughter and excitement. Tears were in every eye. It was a tense ten minutes for every man. Even the laughter was to hide the tears.

"What do you mean when you say you smell them?"

"I smell their different tobaccos," said Helen clapping her hands.

Then the crowd applauded. Helen seemed overjoyed at the applause.

Somebody asked her how she could tell that they were applauding, since she could not hear.

She said "I feel zem."

"How do you feel the applause?"

"Wiz my feet!" Then she danced with delight.

"Do you like golf?" a man asked.

"No!" said Helen.

"Why?" again questioned the man; a golf enthusiast of Cleveland.

"Eet-iz-a-lazy-man's game!" replied Helen. The crowd exploded with delight and I doubt if that business man has ever heard the last of her clever reply.

"Do you read?" asked one of the business men.

"All-ze-time."

"What is your favorite book?"

"Zee Bi-bule!" she said and in that spelling I have tried to imitate her pronunciation of that word. It was as tenderly spoken as the words of a mother speaking of her baby. "Zee-Bi-bule" as that girl spoke the word shall ring like sweet music in my ears forever.

And so, at the beginning of this chapter on the preacher as a man of books serving his community, I make haste to say that he must be a man of "Books and The Book."

#### THE SACREDNESS OF BOOKS

Books are sacred to most people whether they know it or not.

No Chinese boy or girl or man or woman ever notices a bit of torn paper lying on the street that he does not pick it up and stuff it away in a corner some place. That is why travelers in China see little batches of torn newspapers stuck in every corner and hole; as if some birds were gathering up this débris with which to build nests.

"Why do they do that?" I asked an editor friend in Shanghai.

"The printed word is sacred to them."

"Even torn newspapers?" I said smiling.

"Yes; even old torn paper sacks if they have any printing on them."

And a little later he actually showed me a Chinese boy in the act of picking up an old torn paper bag which had printing on it. This boy carefully smoothed that sack out and looking about, found a hole in a brick wall where he placed it.

Not to that same degree, perhaps, but to a great degree, we do in America unconsciously revere the printed page. It is for this reason that preachers can contribute a tremendous service to a community by bringing to it a ministry of books.

The Book Sermon ministry is growing in popularity every year. More and more are people becoming interested in books. This is due to the fact that better books are being written; that preachers are interesting themselves in books to the extent of preaching Book Sermons and also that newspapers are paying more attention to Book Reviews and to running Book Pages. There are few American city papers these days that do not have a real Book Page in the Saturday or Sunday issue. Some of these pages are read all over the nation. And the preacher who is constantly introducing to his audience great and good books, is contributing something to human lives that is a gigantic service.

He will win several things from them for this service. He will win their respect. Perhaps they will not know just exactly why. Perhaps it will be a far survival of that ancient respect for the printed page. But unconsciously people find themselves respecting the Man of Books. The man who shows that he is an alert and a reading preacher will have the constant and the fascinated interest of his people. They want to know about books. They want to live with and within books. He will also win their trust for the man who is reading books that are worth while is a safe man to follow. He knows what is going on in the world.

The "Dramatic Book Sermon" is a new form of homiletics. It gives a preacher an opportunity to introduce something "new under the sun" in his sermons.

Personally I have never been able to make so vivid the story of sin, conviction of sin, repentance, and forgiveness, as I have through Tolstoy's "The Resurrection." I have never been able to picture the beastliness of sin, and the regeneration of a human being as I have through Masfield's "The Everlasting Mercy," or George Eliot's "Romola." I have never been able to present the ramifications of sin as I have through Bojer's recent book: "The Power of a Lie." I have never been able to make so clear the marvelous possi-

bilities of the growth of a human soul as I have through Hugo's "Les Misérables." I have never been able to picture sin so burningly vivid as I have through Masefield's "Hell Hounds." I have never been able to make a great congregation see the real Judas so clearly as I have through Dr. Barton's "Four Hitherto Unpublished Gospels." Nor have I ever been able to make the scenes in Christ's life so human as I have through "The Unknown Disciple." William Allen White's "In The Heart of a Fool" has given me a great, dramatic sermon on the text: "The fool said in his heart there is no God." The Moffatt translation of the Bible has become a real feature of my big, popular evening service.

"I like to hear you read the Bible now as much as I like to hear you preach," says many a man.

"That is because I use the Moffatt Translation and the Bible sounds human and modern to you through its phraseology," I invariably reply.

There is not a single great spiritual truth in the Bible that cannot be preached through the dialogue, through the characters, the scenes, and teachings of some great novel.

And, after trying the "Dramatic Book Sermon" out for five years and in one church for four months straight every Sunday night, I have come to the conclusion that the announcement of a "Dramatic Book Sermon" is the finest drawing

card that I can use. It crowds my church with people; and it also gives me the best medium of getting the truth over to my crowds.

The people will crowd a church to hear a real book sermon for several reasons: First, because every human being has born in his soul something that leaps out to meet the dramatic in any form. Every little child will instinctively act a thing out. Every man and woman has the same thing in their souls. They respond to the dramatic. They like to hear dialogue and action in a sermon. They like to see real characters walk up and down the pulpit. The second reason is, that folks like to appear intelligent about books. They are too busy to read books, so they will go to hear a preacher, who has read books, so that they themselves will know the particular books about which he preaches. Third, folks like something new in homiletics. They have heard the old, firstly, secondly, thirdly, and etc., so long, that when a man brings to them a new type of preaching the news soon spreads through a city and he does not lack for an audience.

At first I used the "Dramatic Book Sermon" now and then. It was so successful, however, that, after a while, I got to using it twice a month. Now for four months straight in my evening sermon I have used this type of preaching exclusively.

"Do you not run out of books?"

"Never! Too many good books are being published," I reply.

"Does it not get monotonous?"

"No! There is infinite variety in books, scenes and characters."

"Is it not harder to write and preach a Dramatic Book Sermon than an ordinary sermon?" I am asked.

"Much harder but worth it!" I reply.

"Do you use anything besides novels and fiction for your Dramatic Book Sermons?" I am asked.

"I use poems, such as Edwin Markham's "How The Great Guest Came," his "The Juggler of Touraine," his "Shoes of Happiness"; I use such great poems as Masfield's "The Everlasting Mercy" and "Hell Hounds"; such great dramatic poems as Thompson's "The Hounds of Heaven," and John Oxenham's "The Gate." I have used such books as "The Americanization of Edward Bok," "The Autobiography of Andrew Carnegie," "The Autobiography of Judas Iscariot," "The Unknown Disciple," "Four Hitherto Unpublished Gospels."

I have found that through these great books, spiritual principles of religion may be made more vivid and lasting; more penetrating and powerful through dialogue, depiction of characters, and illustration; than in any other way that I know.



In addition to the direct spiritual values that a preacher can get out of these "Dramatic Book Sermons" at the time they are preached he has the additional joy of knowing that at the same time he is introducing the young people and the old folks of his audience to new worlds. He is bulging back the horizons of their lives with books and that is a high and holy task at any time. After careful investigation and questioning of many men in professional walks of life I have good reasons to believe that the reading of great books has had as much to do with influencing the lives of young people as the preaching of great sermons. The method of the Dramatic Book Sermon gives a preacher a combination of both.

I always link these books up with the Bible; and I always find that spiritual results are certain to follow. I have seen hundreds of men and women led to Christ and to the altars of the church through these Book Sermons.

Outside of the preacher who is constantly turning the faces of his young people towards college, there is no greater ministry than turning their faces toward good books and introducing young folks to the great characters that are living within the sacred houses of books. Indeed the two ministries are kindred.

In a recent testimony that I have heard con-

ducted by a great hearted preacher for preachers alone each minister was asked to tell exactly the thing that had had the most influence in his life. We were somewhat surprised to learn in that frank testimony from a great group of preachers that few of them had been turned to the higher life through hearing a sermon; but that a large part of them testified to the fact that the reading of certain great books had had the most determining influence in their lives.

It is for that reason and that alone that "Who's Who In America" contains the names of more preachers' children than the offspring of any other profession.

"Why is that?" asked a great business man of a great preacher.

"It is because they were raised with great books," replied the great preacher to the great business man.

"That is a turning point in a lad's life," said the business man thoughtfully.

"What is?" asked the preacher.

"When he is introduced to a great book" replied the business man.

So it is that there are many ministries that the eager preacher may offer to his people; but of them all the Ministry of Books has a high place for everlasting good in human lives.



### **III: THE POWDER OF LIFE**

## THE LURE OF BOOKS

"When by some strange magic a book is transformed and becomes a portal, a door to whose lock one possesses the key, and whose knob one may turn—a door through which one may enter into new knowledge, new feeling, new appreciation of the meaning of men and things—then he begins to feel the lure of books."

*The Lure of Books*, LYNN HAROLD HOUGH.

## CHAPTER III

### *The Powder of Life*

#### THE TEACHER AND BOOKS IN THE LIFE WE LIVE

What a thrilling thing it is to see God wake the world in the morning hours?

I have seen God waken the world; I have heard the cheeping of birds; the calling of wild things; that strange stirring in the forests which comes just as the eastern horizon turns from gray to gold and rose. It is a miracle.

What a thrilling thing it is to see the earth awaken at Spring.

I have seen this happen many Springs. I have seen the transformation that is prophesied in Shelley's line:

"If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?"

I have seen the early birds come back day by day; back from the warm Southland, with prophecy in their wings, hope in their hearts; and faith in their songs. I have seen the early crocuses timidly and yet with great confidence peek above

the black earth even before the tiny shoots of green grass dared the daylight after a long Winter night.

But of all the miracles of time and eternity, the one thing which thrills my soul more than any other miracle of life is to see a child's soul suddenly come to life; come to a great awakening through some outside stimulus.

Every teacher has felt this thrill of emotion at the sublime spectacle of watching a child's soul suddenly leap to life. This is more stupendous, if we who are teachers have eyes to see, than the spectacle of a Grand Canyon under a dawning sun or a Yosemite when daylight breaks across the eastern snow-clad mountains.

In "The Land of Oz" strangely enough I have found a story that makes clear what I want to set forth in this chapter.

You will remember that little Tip, the boy in this child story was left at home one day when Mombi the old Witch went to visit a Man Witch. She had heard that this Man Witch had a Magic powder that would turn any inanimate thing to life if that powder were sprinkled on it.

Tip hated the old Witch with whom he was compelled to live; hated her because she did not treat him kindly. While she was away, he made himself a Pumpkin Man. He took a pumpkin and hollowed it out and cut eyes in it, and made

a nose and a mouth. Then he got a sapling for the body, and sticks for the arms and legs. Then he took a limb of a tree for a neck. He had a good man.

While old Witch Mombi was away that day, Tip decided that he would put his Pumpkin Man in the middle of the road and frighten her when she got back from the Man Witch's home.

He placed his Pumpkin Man in the road and he himself hid behind the bushes along the road to see old Mombi's fright when she should come upon this ugly sight.

Old Mombi was so engrossed in thought that when she suddenly came upon the Pumpkin Man, she looked up at him and said:

"'Good evening Sir'."

Noticing that the Pumpkin Man did not speak, she looked up and saw that this was a trick of Tip's.

"'So that rascally boy has been playing tricks on me again. Very good! I'll beat him black-and-blue for trying to scare me in this fashion'."

She raised her stick to smash the Pumpkin head and then a bright idea struck her.

"'Why here is a good chance to try my new powder' said she, 'and then I can tell whether that crooked wizard has fairly traded secrets, or whether he has fooled me as wickedly as I fooled him'."



Then Mombi took out her Pepper Box where she had hidden the Magic Powder that would turn all inanimate things to life and walking up to the Pumpkin Head, she poured some of the powder on his yellow top.

Then according to the formula, she raised her left hand, with its little finger pointed upwards and said:

“ ‘Weaugh!’ ”

Then she lifted her right hand, with the thumb pointed upward, and said:

“ ‘Teaugh!’ ”

Then she lifted both hands, with all the fingers and thumbs spread out, and cried:

“ ‘Peaugh!’ ”

Suddenly Jack Pumpkinhead stepped back a few feet and spoke aloud.

Old Mombi danced around him frantic with delight.

Then she threw her stick into the air and caught it as it came down; and she hugged herself with both arms, and tried to do a jig; and all the time she repeated rapturously:

“ ‘He lives!—he lives!—he lives!’ ”

The Magic Powder had awakened the Pumpkinhead to life.

This same thing happens to the life of a child or of Youth when the Magic Powder, the life-

giving powder and power of a book is waved over that child's soul.

Every teacher has seen this miracle happen. Every teacher in day school or Sunday school has seen this sudden and bewildering thing leap out like a star in the night, to blaze with new glory and take its place among the permanent and regular orbits of the Heavens.

A child's soul often needs just the magic of a book for its sudden awakening.

Every teacher has, in his or her keeping, fifty little kegs of dynamite. Just as Emerson said of the New Testament, "There is dynamite in it as soon as the world finds it out!"

So may it be said of a child's life. There is T.N.T. in a child's life; aye, in every child's life; as soon as the teacher or the world touches that life to action. A book is often the thing that will awaken a child to new life.

Luther Burbank once said to me, "All animal life is sensitive to environment, but of all living things, the child is the most sensitive. Surroundings act upon it as the outside world acts upon the plate of a camera. A child is the most susceptible thing in the world to influence, and if that force is applied rightly and constantly when the child is in its most receptive condition, the effect will be pronounced, immediate and permanent."

In his little book on "The Trajning of the Human Plant," Burbank quotes the great kindergartner, Froebel, as saying,

"The task of education is to assist natural development toward its destined end.

"As the beginning gives a bias to the whole after development, so the early beginnings of education are of most importance."

Luther Burbank calls attention to the fact that it takes a great force to change the aspect of minerals and metals. Powerful acids, great heat, electricity and often powerful mechanical force are needed.

It does not take such force to make a change in plant life. Burbank says that mild heat, sunshine, the atmosphere and greatly diluted chemicals will completely change a plant's life.

A plant will respond to outside influences just as a human being will. A plant will get drunk with alcohol; with drugs it will turn sick; and it can be chloroformed the same as a human being.

But of all the plants in the world the Child Plant; the Human Plant in every stage of school life is the most suceptible to change; to outside stimulæ. It is a marvelous thing when a teacher once catches the light of this great truth. It is not a hard medium that a teacher has. It is a soul as soft, and as pliable as the soft clay in the hands

of a Lorado Taft. And the possibilities are the same if the teacher be a trained sculptor in human souls.

Sometimes when I think of the possibilities that lie in the hands of the teacher who has my child many more hours a day than I have her; when I consider how quickly that teacher may awaken the soul of my child to high or low ideals; when I consider that that teacher may set my child's tiny feet to take either the High Road or the Low Road of life, I bow my head in prayer for that teacher and for my child; in prayer that that teacher may realize what a high and holy task is hers; the task of awakening a child's soul; the task of sprinkling the magic powder of books on a child's soul to see that child leap to new life.

If the reader will grant me a word of personal testimony to add to this possibility of the teacher's influence on a young life through books, I shall add it just at this point.

I once went to a Business College to cram up for college entrance examinations. I had the Summer months in which to get ready my mathematics.

"All right, I'll turn you over to Dr. Stevens for your mathematics and before Fall he will have you ready!" said the head of the Business College.

I reported to Dr. Stevens and found him a dear old gentleman with a long gray beard and kindly blue eyes. He looked for all the world like the Angelo marble of Moses; save for the fact that he was human and not cold marble.

I told him what I wanted.

He said "All right, we'll see. But before we begin on mathematics let us read a little from 'Young's Night Thoughts.'"

He opened the pages of this marvelous book and read, in a sweetly modulated voice. When he wanted to put it down, I protested. It had captured my imagination. It had awakened my soul! I never knew that there was such beauty, such wonderment, such adventure of soul hidden in the pages of a book. I went home in a flush. I took the book with me. I read most of the night in that book. When dawn came my cheeks were not less flushed with rose than the eastern sky which I could see out of my window.

I was all excited. It was like a religious conversion. I could not wait to get back to the dear old man at the Business College.

He had opened a new world to me; but better he had unlocked the doors of my own life; he had turned the keys that opened the gates to my own Kingdom; he had sprinkled upon my soul, in solemn splendor the Magic Powder of a great book.

"And, Mine eyes had seen the glory of the coming of the Lord!"

The rest of that Summer two things happened to my soul.

I learned mathematics well enough to pass the entrance examinations in the Fall. That was what I was paying the Business College for. That was also what this dear old teacher had been instructed to do for me.

But I got something that Summer which has stuck to me through all my life; something that has had more to do with the curve that the chart of my life has taken upward than anything else that has ever happened to me at the hands of a teacher; and that was: I got my soul awakened.

From that day on, I grew in knowledge and stature in my world of books. I am still a Pigmy but I am having the joy of knowing each day that it gets better further on.

I owe more to that one old gray bearded teacher who was supposed to teach me mathematics but who taught me books also, than I owe to any other College or High School or University teacher.

He was a superannuated teacher at that. He had seen his best days and had been asked to resign from the High School where he was principal because he was considered too old to teach.

The Business College took him up just because they felt sorry for the old gentleman.

But, thank God, that he was there and that he had not lost either his interest in books or his interest in a boy's soul.

My love of good literature; my taste for the best in books; the great hobby of my life; the thing that gives me more power in my ministry and more delight in my life than any other single force; this old man awakened me to in that Business College.

To perform this great miracle with books in a boy's life, the teacher must love both the boy and the book. He must have a passion for souls and a passion for books. This combination is superb and supreme in its influences for good in life.

Burbank says:

"A man who hates plants, or is neglectful of them, or who has other interests beyond them, could no more be a successful plant cultivator than he could turn back the tides of the ocean with his finger-tips. The thing is utterly impossible. You can never bring up a child to its best estate without love."

If this chapter succeeds in making teachers see what a tremendous miracle they have within their power each day, the use of stories and books in the hands of teachers will be greater.

The teacher who learns this great thing can never again look upon teaching as drudgery. It will lift the task of teaching to new heights.

"I never step inside of my school room now, that I do not feel as if I were stepping into some sacred shrine of devotion," said a teacher to me once.

"Why?" I asked her.

"Because a pupil of mine, who has become great in the councils of the state in making a speech a month ago said that I had awakened his life once when I handed him a copy of 'The Life of Lincoln.'"

"Do you remember the event?" I asked her.

"I do not, but it is enough that I have awakened one such life as that to new glories. Under God I shall go on with what I used to think was a tedious task; go on in the hope that here and there I may awaken other souls!"

"That is a big enough job for any man or woman!" I said reverently as I saw the new light in her eyes.

"That is God's task!" she added.

"What do you mean?"

"The task of awakening souls! He has let me help Him!"

Personally this writer remembers, above all other books of his childhood, a little old celluloid backed book of Bible Stories. They were so



simple that he wonders now how they came to fascinate a five-year-old boy so much.

There was not a single touch of color on a single page. The drawings were black and white pen and ink sketches of the disciples pulling in the nets; the story of the "pearl beyond price"; the story of Jesus curing the blind, and halt, and maimed.

"Tell me a story, Mother, tell me a story!"

What a thrilling sentence that is. It is the age-old cry of the human soul to have a chance to grow. To those who understand, it is the most thrilling challenge of all life.

"Tell me a story, Mother, tell me a story!"

To the wise teacher this is Opportunity speaking; speaking as she never speaks at any other time in life.

I talked with one teacher who counted the number of times that she could tell the same story to a group of children and that group listened to the same story just twenty-eight times when the teacher herself got so tired of telling it, that when the children asked for it the twenty-ninth time, she was too nervous to tell it again.

"But those children were just as eager for that same story as if I had never told it to them before."

And, so it was, that five of us little tots through all of our young childhood listened to stories

out of this old celluloid backed book of Bible Stories; and I for one shall never, never forget them. They left a mark on my soul that shall never die and to this day, that broken backed book, loose of leaf, dirty-paged, torn and tattered is one of the most precious books I have.

The teacher is handling plastic clay.

The teacher of a child or of youth may make what he or she wishes out of a human soul.

One of the modeling instruments of such a sculptor is a book.

My friend, Mr. Lorado Taft, once said to me "I am getting such great joy out of my children. When I get home from my Chautauqua trips, my daughter will greet me as eagerly as she does a lover."

"That is a wonderful thing, Mr. Taft, and evidently you have had occasion in your life time to model something besides clay."

His face lighted up as the idea caught his imagination.

"You are right; in its plastic state I had a chance to model the soul of a child; and I am afraid that I was selfish enough to model that soul to love her old good-for-nothing Dad."

I have watched Mr. Taft, with his deft fingers, model the head of a little child before a great Chautauqua audience. I have watched him do this as he talked to an audience in fascinating

gossipy language of the art shop. But when he was through his incessant run of talk, there that beautiful child head was, so sweet that the audience gave a gasp.

"I am so driven and so busy with a thousand things that I do not have time to give personal attention to a child. I haven't time to get a book ready," said a teacher to me one day. "I do not even have time to select good books for children."

Then I remembered Mr. Taft and how busy he was, and is, with his art work; and yet how always he had time to give to his children. And I remembered how incessantly he talked as he molded that little child head and yet how he molded as he talked and finally what infinite results of beauty he got.

No teacher can afford to be too busy to fail to see that the children or the youth under his or her direction get good books into their hands and into their souls.

## **IV: KEEPING THE SOUL OF THE WORLD ALIVE**

## CHANGING ONE'S RELATION WITH THE WORLD

"The aim of literary study is not to amuse the hours of leisure; it is to awake oneself, it is to be alive, to intensify one's capacity for pleasure, for sympathy, and for comprehension. It is to change utterly one's relation with the world."

*The Literary Taste*, ARNOLD BENNETT.

## CHAPTER IV

### *Keeping the Soul of the World Alive*

#### PARENTS—AND BOOKS IN THE LIFE WE LIVE

A great soul spake that phrase "Keeping the Soul of the World Alive."

Another great heart passed it on to me in his book "The Little Old Lady."

Charles Sylvester Horne first used it and Dr. Lynn Harold Hough handed it on to us.

Dr. Hough in his most fascinating book, "The Little Old Lady," gives us a picture of one way of keeping the soul of the world alive.

"The Little Old Lady" is sitting in a room before an open fire and two boys are sprawled out on the rug, while a beautiful girl-child sits on a small chair listening, with fascinated eyes, to Christmas stories.

The author of the book in which this story is told sits in an alcove that leads off from this room. He looks at this scene with misty eyes. He asks himself, "What is the eternal significance of this scene which I am watching at this moment?"

The Grandmother was telling the children a Christmas story about a little boy on Christmas night who was permitted to stay up until nine o'clock because it happened to be Christmas.

The little boy sat in his Daddy's lap watching the candles on the Christmas tree.

Then he fell asleep and dreamed a dream.

He dreamed that an Angel came, and, starting at the bottom of the tree the Angel blew out all of the candles save one of them. The topmost candle the Angel took, and flying down to the little boy, handed that candle to him, saying "Take this candle of Christmas love, and put it in your heart, and keep it burning there forever."

The father noticed that his little boy was asleep and gently lifted him up and took him to his little white bed.

As the Daddy took the little boy to bed, the laddie muttered over and over, "Don't let the Angel go away, and be sure and keep the candle burning."

As the writer of this beautiful story sat in the alcove watching Grandmother tell this Christmas story to these three open-mouthed, wide and misty-eyed children, he suddenly realized the significance of this beautiful scene and of all such scenes the world over.

"That Grandmother when she tells a great story like that, or reads a great book, or puts

a book into the hands of a little child, is, to use Sylvester Horne's phrase, 'Keeping the Soul of the World Alive.'"

Books do that for children. Books are not only the Magic Powder that awaken a child or a youth's soul but books keep that soul alive once it is awakened.

One great soul has said: .

"There is no Academy on earth equal to a Mother's Reading to her child."

Charles Lamb said:

"Sweet are the studies of the schoolboy, delicious his idle hours. Fresh and gladsome is his waking, balmy are his slumbers book-pillowed."

John Masefield speaks in that wonderful poem of the regeneration of a human soul, "The Everlasting Mercy," of the drunken prize fighter who refused to batter in the preacher's door on his midnight debauch, when he ran, stark naked, through the town with the nozels of the town hose one in each hand, battering down doors; all but the preacher's door.

When asked why he did not batter down the preacher's door, he said that when he was a child the preacher had paid some attention to him; had given him an orange.

Masefield's comment here is:



"Whoever gives a child a treat  
 Makes joy-bells ring on Heaven's street  
 Whoever gives a child a home,  
 Builds Palaces in Kingdom Come;  
 Whoever brings a child to birth  
 Gives Savior Christ again to earth."

These are beautiful and tender appreciations of the soul of a child. Every parent ought to catch the thrill of their meaning before going further into this chapter on the place of books in the life we live; books in the hands of parents.

Joaquin Miller understood the spirit of what Jesus meant when he said "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." He who had a little child of his own understood Jesus and His meaning:

"Then, reaching His hands, He said lowly  
 'Of such is My Kingdom,' and then  
 Took the little brown babes in the Holy  
 White hands of the Savior of men;  
 Held them up to His breast and caressed them  
 Put His face down to theirs as in prayer;  
 Held them close to His face and so, blessed them  
 With baby hands hid in His hair."

Somehow in all life and literature this scene stands out as revealing the heart of the Christ in its recognition of the sacredness of Childhood, and the eternal obligation that is upon the world

of parents to "keep the Soul of the World alive" through a little child.

Mary, the sister of Lazarus, according to Bernie Babcock in "The Coming of the King" loved Jesus as any woman loves any man. One evening Mary and Lazarus were sitting on the top of their Oriental home, looking into the stars and the far Moabite Mountains when Mary remembered the first time that she ever saw Jesus:

"Some things the heart can never forget" said Mary, resting her head against her harp.

"Never will I forget the Master as I saw Him first. Against a white marble pillar carved with white lilies, he stood. Behind Him, high against the line made by the portico roof, was the blue, blue sky—bending as it touched the purple mountains and the green and silver olive hills. Straight and strong he stood, and the little one did look into His face as if there it saw its future. One of its hands lay on Jesus' cheek and the other was close hidden in His large hand. When the child stroked the face of the man and smiled, the man kissed it and rested His hand upon its head a moment in blessing and gave it to its mother. Will I forget? No, never!"

Jesus Christ Himself first made us parents see the supreme importance of "Keeping the Soul of the World Alive" through keeping the soul of a child alive.

It is a significant thing that Luther Burbank told me one day out in Santa Rosa.

"What was that significant thing he told you?" you ask.

He told me that when he was a child, a friend gave him a Cactus Plant as a plaything. For a long time he watered and watched and loved this Cactus Plant. And it is significant that later in his life his reputation was made through his development of this plant. Who knows but that simple gift in childhood left its undying impression.

It is a significant fact that John Muir, one of America's greatest naturalists during the formative period of his life was taken about by his father across the American continent. It took the family a year to make the journey. As each sunset and sunrise glorified the skies, this old Scotch father would take his bairns out and show them the beautiful skies and tell them these were surely the robes of God. Who knows but that sense of reverence instilled in that boy heart as he lived in the out-of-doors for a year, made him America's greatest Naturalist and bred in his little soul a love for Nature which turned the curves of his life forever to lead into the hills, the Glacial Meadows and Ice-bound Bays of Alaska?

Dawson in one of his war books tells of a visit

to the home of Joan D'Arc, that beautiful little town of Doremey and says that he was impressed with the fact that every girl in that little village, whether she was beautiful or ugly physically, seemed to look like Joan D'Arc; so much did the spirit of that beautiful girl permeate the little village.

Let the parent hear O. Henry's story of the negative of Dr. Hough's story of "Keeping the Soul of the World Alive" through a little child.

This is an illustration of what may happen if the parent refuses to listen to that immortal cry of a child "Tell me a story."

In "The Trimmed Lamp" there is a story called "The Guilty Party." O. Henry pictures a red-haired man, unshaven, untidy, sitting in a rocking-chair by a window, smoking a pipe and reading a paper.

In comes a beautiful little girl begging for attention from her father.

"Papa, won't you play a game of checkers with me if you aren't too tired?"

"No I won't! Can't a man who works all day have a little rest when he comes home? Why don't you go out and play with the other kids on the sidewalk?"

The Mother protests against the little girl playing on the sidewalk, perhaps because she is conscious that the sidewalks in this particular part of

New York are what O. Henry calls "The corridors of the House of Sin."

The second scene in this graphic story is a Dance Hall. A grown-up girl, many years removed from the twelve tender years when she begged her red-haired father to play checkers with her; to tell her a story; to read her a book! This grown-up girl was beautiful to look upon. But she had grown up in the street and she had become a part of a city gang. There was a fight at the dance on this particular night and a black-eyed, black-haired girl shot across the ball room floor and sunk a long, slender knife into a man's back.

The third chapter is a scene in Heaven where a trial is being held to discover who was to blame for this murder at the hands of a little girl grown up to womanhood.

The conclusion was stated in these words:

"The guilty party you've got to look for in this case is a red-haired, unshaven, untidy man, sitting by the window reading, in his stocking feet, while his children play in the streets."

It is a horrible story.

But it points the negative experience of those who refuse to listen to the cry of a little child "Tell me a story!"

If a parent wants to know what will be the result of not answering this cry of a little child to keep its soul alive by telling it a story; by

playing "checkers" with it; by putting a worth while book into its hand, all he has to do is to read this O. Henry story and he will know in all of its horrible details.

True enough, this is an extreme case, but it points the general direction and the general tendency of a child's life which does not get the response from a parent that its little soul cries out for. God pity us parents for not being willing, because of our own selfishness, to give our children at least enough attention to keep their little souls alive.

I never feel so ashamed of my own littleness in this respect as I do when I read "Roosevelt's Letters to His Children." I keep this book at hand for my own soul's sake; to jerk me awake when I become listless and offer that world-old cry, "I'm too busy to give myself to my child!"

That is a puny excuse of a puny soul.

No man ever lived who was busier than Roosevelt when he was in the White House and yet he never was too busy to write to every one of his children. He never was too busy to give them of himself. He never was too busy to read to them and to tell them what he was reading.

I hope that every parent will read this Roosevelt book. It will be a good tonic. It will do the parent-heart good.

He will say to himself when he lays that book

down "If Roosevelt had time to 'Keep the soul of his child alive' why haven't I?"

"There's the soul of the world going there!" said a friend of mine.

"Where?" I asked startled at his strange gesture and words.

It was one morning when school was beginning. "There!" he said, pointing to a group of children going to school with a sublime eagerness in their faces, and books under their arms or over their shoulders.

And that reminded me of what Lorne Pierce said in an article which was written for "The Christian Guardian":

"All over the world . . . the children are trooping to school . . . in the country lanes . . . making short cuts through the corn. . . . The morning side of the planet is alive with them; one hears their pattering footsteps everywhere . . . these school-going children of the dawn."

And why were they going?

They were going to "Keep the Soul of the World alive."

And who sent them?

Parents.

And did the parents think that there was no other way to keep the soul of the world alive? Did the parents think that their obligations ceased when they sent their children to school?

Yes, that was what most of the parents thought. They thought that, when they had turned the souls of their children over to utter strangers; to teachers; most of whom they did not know; that that was enough.

But a few wise parents knew that it was still in their keeping to supplement the teacher, the preacher, the church, the school and the newspaper, by selecting good books for their children and giving their children a chance to grow souls under the direction of love and home and books.

One of the most effective ways that a parent can do this is to teach a child what good books are. Let the parent very early teach a child's lips to lisp in poetry. Robert Louis Stevenson's "Garden of Verse" is always at hand and a score of others; ancient and modern.

Children love Longfellow, and Whittier. Children are fascinated by "Snow Bound" and "The Wreck of the Hesperus." The classics are full of narrative poetry which children love.

The Dorothy Calhoun books of "Little Folks" are veritable mines of gold out of which soul stuff for children is mined.

But one of the best things that can be done is to give your children their own library. Get them an individual Book Mark and Book Plate and let them build up their own library. I have



seen this tried many times and its results fascinate me.

This might be a significant thing for other parents to think over; that of all the professions, the largest percentage of preachers' children are listed in "Who's Who."

Why is this?

The preacher cannot give his children money. He is always poor. He cannot give them travel. He cannot give them financial backing in the world, and he cannot give them social position in the sense that the world speaks of this thing.

What does he give them?

He gives them books. He surrounds them with books. They live in an atmosphere of books from Childhood on. They know books. They hear books talked. They travel through books; travel the world around. They dream through books.

Of course, there is the moral and spiritual contribution that a preacher's home makes to a child, but to my way of thinking, the one thing that puts the large percentage of preachers' children in "Who's Who" is due to books.

For there is no greater contribution that a home can make to a child than good books.

I think that I can best conclude this chapter by a strange experience I once had in San Francisco.

When my baby Betty was three years of age

a photographer in my church took a picture of her without letting me know about it.

Then one day he said "I want you to come down to my studio. I have a new experience for you."

He talked so mysteriously that he aroused my curiosity and I went.

He took me into the dark room.

I felt as if I were being initiated into some lodge.

Then he got his pan of developing water with its chemical mixture and into this pan of water, he dropped a film. I watched it closely. Suddenly, two little pairs of white shoes began to show on the film. Those tiny baby shoes looked fairly familiar to me but I did not guess what a surprise he had in store for me.

Next a pair of darling little hands, with a familiar ring gradually developed on that film. Then came a pair of little knees and legs. After this, in such bewildering rapidity that I was thrilled, startled and moved to strange pulsations of my heart, until tears came and a sob stuck in my throat; there developed before my eyes the feet, hands, arms, face and body of my own baby.

It almost seemed as if I were seeing her little body gradually develop out of the mists of nothing through the genius of creation.

Then suddenly it flashed over my soul that this miracle that I was looking down upon in the dark room of that photographer was a symbol of life.

For at least twenty years I was to see her soul and her body develop in the Dark Room of Life for the Dawn of the daylight of Eternity.

That thrilled me.

I was to have a part in that development. I was to supply the water of life; the chemicals; the love, the culture, the spiritual surroundings. And if I, the parent, did this thing, I was to have the sublime joy of watching a human soul develop to perfection under my very eyes.

This was adventure!

This had a great glow and glory about it!

This was parenthood in its deepest meaning.

Aye, this was something more: this was "Keeping the Soul of the World alive," through keeping the soul of a single child alive and making it grow and develop.

And I take it that there are many things that will keep the soul of a child alive: there is the church, there is travel, there is school, there are friends, and there are books.

And most certainly among the greatest of these is books!

And bear in mind as Burbank says:

"That this child-life in these first ten years is the most sensitive thing in the world; never lose sight of that. Children respond to ten thousand subtle influences which would leave no more impression upon a plant than they would upon the sphinx. Vastly more sensitive is it than the most sensitive plant."

Before we go to the next chapter on this thesis, let me close this talk about "Parents and Books in the Life We Live" by calling attention to the fact that Kermit Roosevelt and the Roosevelt children have a strange and fascinating love for books. This they undoubtedly inherited from their great father, whose life bulged out and was undergirded with, and was illuminated by books; like some great Gothic Cathedral.

In his book "The Happy Hunting Grounds" Kermit Roosevelt has an entire chapter entitled "Two Book Lovers in South America" to which I refer in the chapter on "Books in the Life of Theodore Roosevelt."

This chapter seems like the echo of some chapters in Roosevelt's various books of adventure in strange lands. Young Kermit got his love for books from his father.

Indeed, Kermit's love for books is a direct answer to a prophecy that Roosevelt himself makes in "A Book-Lover's Holidays in The Open":

"Fathers and mothers who are wise can train their children first to practice, and soon to like, the sustained mental application necessary to enjoy good books."

This great soul was not only great himself, but he gave his children a chance of greatness by putting good books into their young lives; and by handing down to them, that which is better than gold, yea, better than much fine gold; a love for books.

**V: THE MAGIC STONE THAT  
TURNS THE WORLD TO GOLD**

## CITIES OF THE MIND

"Through his reading a man comes to the cities of the mind. He hears the million voices of the intellectual life. There is the din and roar of the traffic in ideas, the incessant jostle of the commerce of the mind. A man watches it as a fascinated spectator. He walks through the streets, with their strange sights and sounds, and with all the hum and movement about him he begins to feel that he is really alive. In the evening he climbs to some eminence above his city of the mind and, as the multitudinous bright lights shine out in all the streets he watches the little human figures moving amid the shining ways. It is all full of a wonderful charm. He too would walk these streets where night is made like day. He too would live in that wonderful glow."

*The Lure of Books*, LYNN HAROLD HOUGH.

## CHAPTER V

### *The Magic Stone that Turns the World to Gold*

#### THE GLOW OF BOOKS IN THE LIFE WE LIVE

Let us begin the tale with a parable!

It is the story of a magic stone!

"What kind of magic stone?" I am asked.

"One that will turn the world to gold," I answer.

Books will do that for anybody.

"Will they turn leaden sermons to gold?" asked a long-suffering layman; who has slept under many a weight of woe.

"Yes, they will turn sermons of lead to gold."

There was a youth once; perhaps he was a preacher. He was told of a stone that would turn all metal to gold. He started out one morning to search for it. He found a coal-black stone.

"Surely this is the magic stone," he said and touched it to his leaden belt but the belt remained the same.

He found a pure white stone; as white as Shasta's snow.



"Ah! Ha! But this is the magic stone!" he cried and leapt eagerly to make it his own.

He touched it to his belt of lead but no transformation occurred.

His search continued and after an hour he spied a crimson stone along the shore. It was as red as the blood of Christ. He tenderly lifted it in his hands and touched it to his leaden belt but the belt remained the same.

Tired and disappointed, he searched all day; grabbing a stone here and a stone there; touching them to his leaden belt; hardly looking to see if any magic had been wrought.

Listlessly and wearily he lifted stone after stone and threw them away.

Night came and he went to his rest. But when he had thrown his cloak aside and was unfastening his belt; his eyes suddenly stared at his belt. It had turned to gold.

Sometime during the day, he had had the magic stone in his very hands and had carelessly, lazily, and indifferently flung it from him.

So it is that the Preacher throws away the Magic Stone of Book Reading.

I know a young preacher who did that. I heard him tell it with his own lips.

"I haven't read a book since I left the Theological Seminary," he said in my hearing not many moons ago, somewhere between the Atlantic and

the Pacific Oceans. I give these minute directions so that it will not be difficult for the curious to trace his habitat.

A month later I heard that same preacher berating the District Superintendent and the Bishop with an energy and a bias that would have elected him to the Presidency of the United States if it had been applied in that direction. If the Bishop had been a baseball and that preacher had been Babe Ruth, the Bishop would have been "knocked" clear out of the "Arena" as Bishop Quayle calls it.

"What's the matter with you?" I mildly queried; for I felt that the Bishop in this particular area was a mighty good fellow.

"The Bishop's got it in for me; the District Superintendent doesn't like me; and they're trying to hold me down!"

He was a good fellow! I liked him! Everybody seemed to like him personally. But his preaching was covered with moss. He was still using illustrations from the Spanish-American War and he was still assuming that the Evolution theory had just recently been discovered and he had never heard of "Kropotkin" or "Mutual Aid." He was assuming that the latest writer of good and great fiction was Tolstoy; and he thought that Ella Wheeler Wilcox was among the moderns in the realms of poetry.

"He's all right but he isn't interesting!" the District Superintendent said to a friend of mine. The District Superintendents never confide in me and so I have to get most of this dialogue second-handed.

I remembered my friend's boast, "I haven't read a book since I left the Seminary." I think that that had something to do with that leaden weight that seemed to be holding him down; and not the Bishop or the Superintendent.

I think that the heaviest weight that a young preacher; or an old one too, for that matter; can tie to his feet is the habit of getting along without books!

On the other hand, I think that the very thing that will put wings on his soul and make a Mercury out of him is the book reading habit.

Once I myself was lost but I found myself!

When Borden P. Bowen died I left Boston Theological Seminary.

I was just beginning to get my feet on solid ground.

For years I floundered around in the quick-sands.

I was like the woman in that most startling of modern novels, "The Great Way."

On "The Great Way," I too, found my "Painted Deserts" of book-reading. By that I mean that I was littering up the attic of my mind

with rubbish until I could not see out of the windows for dust and cobwebs. The darkness was so impenetrable that I could not find my way around in my own mind.

I, too, found my "Bad Valley" of reading, for at times I found myself harassed with doubt and beset with darkness when no star shone to light my footsteps.

"What was the trouble in 'The Bad Valley'?" you ask me.

"The trouble was, that I was not reading the right kind of books."

I, too, passed through "The Wilderness" that is along "The Great Way."

"What was this wilderness?" you ask.

"It was the wilderness of confused reading. I read any and everything that was handed to me; any and everything that I could buy, beg or borrow. It was a conglomerate mass of senseless and inane reading which left me wandering like one of the "Babes in the Wood"; lost and alone.

Then I heard "The Voice" on "The Great Way" and then I saw the Light along the Via Grande.

Then I discovered in the words of the woman of "The Great Way":

"Not that the Great Way is clouded. That miraculous universal thing is clear. Even this

part of it, for have I not told you it is colorful? Why it is BRILLIANT! The clouds are in ME!"

I needed Light. I needed an Epiphany. I found it in books; the right kind of books. I got hold of Bishop McConnell's books.

They looked foreboding and glacier-like.

Before I had read them, I felt something like Uncle Tom Rogers, a baldheaded druggist in my home town. Needless to say, Uncle Tom is quite orthodox.

Uncle Tom said to me one day, "I like your friend Bishop McConnell but I am afraid that he explains things around too much!"

Then I read "Understanding the Scriptures." That laid one corner stone in the Temple of my ministerial life. After reading that great book I knew forever and aye that the Book was to be understood as "The Book of Life"; the "Book of Humanity," the "Book of God," "The Book of Christ" and "The Book of the Cross." That book put a solid rock, like El Capitan, under my young feet. I would be ashamed to confess how many sermons I have gotten out of its pages.

Then I got hold of "The Christian Focus." That gave me another corner stone and after reading it I felt something solid under my stumbling feet. I felt as if I could stand up and look the average sermon-tester and small-town

church critic in the eyes and flinch not in the face of his criticism.

"Public Opinion and Theology," laid the third corner stone in my youthful Temple of Preaching and after reading it, the consciousness of a closer relationship to life in my Gospel and my church came to me.

"Religious Certainty," put the note of confidence in my soul!

"I felt as if I could lick the world after reading that book!" said a young preacher friend of mine.

I know what he meant. He meant that forever after reading that book he knew where he was going. He was like a river in that respect. The book does that for one! It makes one as sure as a river of where he is going!

After reading that book there were no more "I think so's."

That book shoots the "I have felt!" of Tennyson's poem into a young preacher's soul!

On these four books of Bishop McConnell's have I builded the Temple foundations of my preaching.

In between have I laid the solid stones of other books; and other men who deal with the fundamentals of Theology, and the Bible and Life.

The Book World has sculptured enough solid

material for us to build a Temple of Preaching and Living!

Of course, the stones may lie there in the quarry forever; or they may be carted to our doors and we may never use them!

We may be like the youth in the Parable with which I started this chapter; we may have within our grasp the stones that will turn the world to gold and throw them indifferently away from us! Books are the magic stones that will turn our preaching, our ministry, our world to gold!

## **VI: BOOKS AND THE BIG BOOST**



## THE DOORS ARE OPEN

The doors are open, Ye reading men!  
The doors are open to Youth again.  
Come you down from the mountain way  
Come from the vales where shadows play!

Books are doors to wide new ways  
Where Science dwells and new stars blaze;  
These doors are open to history;  
Open wide that the world may see.

Open are doors where great men dwell;  
Open are gates to Dante's hell;  
Flung as wide as the starry skies—  
Open wide for the eager eyes!

Books are open where poets dream;  
The doors of the past where great lights stream;  
Open the doors of the things to be;  
Books are the gates of Prophecy!

Books are open to Empires old;  
Open to mines of gleaming gold;  
Wide are the gates—down are the bars  
Pointing the way to the timeless stars.

Open are paths to the Milky Way  
And far beyond to a new-born day:  
To Orion and the Pleiades;  
To other and further stars than these!

Books are the gates to art and truth  
For these are ever the dreams of Youth:  
Thresholds wide shall your sure feet trod  
Up to the doors of the House of God!

## CHAPTER VI

### *Books and the Big Boost*

#### YOUTH AND BOOKS IN THE LIFE WE LIVE

Senator Dolliver was speaking in a big auditorium in Pittsburg. He was in the full strength of his great powers as an orator, and on this particular night he was holding an audience of five thousand people tense! Men and women were sitting on the edges of their seats in that silent tribute to a public speaker which makes an audience forget itself and its surroundings.

This great and eloquent American platform master was speaking about books. He was telling the story of Jean Valjean from Victor Hugo's "Les Misérables." The audience was living over those dramatic and eventful scenes in the upward sweep to victory of Jean Valjean's great man-soul.

Senator Dolliver had finished his exposition of this great regeneration and upward climb of a heroic soul and had just made the statement: " 'Les Misérables', Victor Hugo's great book of fiction is, without doubt, the world's masterpiece!"

He had hardly made that statement when a ten-year-old boy who had been sitting on the edge of his seat in that vast Exposition Hall, forgetting where he was, forgetting the people around him, thrilled with the superb eloquence of Senator Dolliver leapt to his feet and shouted "That's what I think!"

The crowd laughed aloud at the boy's enthusiasm.

The red-headed lad suddenly realized that he was in the midst of a crowd of five thousand people and that he had been so engrossed that he had interjected that remark into the midst of the Senator's address. He was so embarrassed that he sat down and wept with chagrin.

But after the lecture was over, the big, friendly Senator from Iowa, close friend to McKinley, then President of the United States, hunted up the little ten-year-old lad and for ten minutes they talked about "Les Misérables" like two grown up comrades.

"'Les Misérables' marked the great moment in my life!" he said to me a while ago. "I read it when I was ten years old. It took me weeks to read it. I did not understand all that was in it, but I caught the full sweep and wonder of the fact that Jean Valjean was down and out morally and then by a magnificent attempt at climbing he reached the top of the white peak of a high

moral and spiritual existence. The reading of that single book marked the turning point in my life!"

"That book gave you what I call the big boost then?" I said to him.

"It changed the entire contour of my life! Is that what you mean?"

"That is exactly what I mean!"

"I would have gone into the steel business if that book had not been thrust into my hands at the right moment!"

This story, picked out of the romance of life, is illustrative of a fact that every man who deals with folks, whether that man be a teacher, a preacher, an editor or a salesman finds out sooner or later: that a book may often be the turning point in the life of a young boy or girl!

"As far as that is concerned a book may be the turning point in any man or woman's life at any age from the cradle to the grave!" added my friend the great educator.

"What do you mean?" I asked him.

"I mean that I just happen to know a man in New York City who read Bojer's 'The Power of a Lie' last Winter and two days later went to a friend of mine whom he had defrauded and paid back every cent of the money that he had stolen, with interest that ran over a period of fifteen years. That tremendous story of the

utter ramifications of a lie had gotten hold of his soul; until it made a man out of him!"

Every preacher discovers sooner or later that books have marked the turning point in the lives of many of the young folks of his church.

I once had a young people's meeting, the idea of which I originated and organized. That meeting I called "What Books Have Done For Me."

It was at this meeting that I got the phrase that I am using as the title of this chapter.

A young man stood up. He was, perhaps, the leading business man in the community. His success had been phenomenal. His unusual success in the manufacturing field had made him stand out as one of the leaders of that community.

He said that night, "I am here to testify to the fact that a great book, none other than George Eliot's 'Romola,' came to me at exactly the time in life that I needed it; at a time when success was going to my head and it gave me the big boost toward decent things; a boost that I badly needed at that particular time in my life! I was just ripe to go the way that young Tito went because success was coming fast; but reading that book gave me the big boost!"

"Reading that book gave me the big boost!" I can hear his young vibrant voice ringing out through that room to this day as I write.

Other young men of every walk of life; and

young women also spoke that evening on what books had done for them but this phrase stuck in my mind and I have not been able to forget it. "But reading that book gave me the big boost!"

That phrase places book-selling, and book-publishing, and book-boosting on a higher plane than these occupations have ever been on before.

If every author that wrote a book; every group of book editors who accept or reject a book; every publisher who published a book, and every preacher, teacher and librarian who pass on a good book to the reader could remember to say to themselves "This book may be the book that will give some boy or girl the big boost! Therefore I must handle it eagerly and with enthusiasm," we would have a new book world in a few months!

Or if every one of these book servants said "This stuff is dynamite that I have in my hands! It has the power in it to blow up every life that it reaches; power to break chains that have shackled human souls for years; power to tear down the walls of tradition in hundreds of lives; power to shake the dead awake!" then we would handle a book, and pass it on with a different feeling than that which we now possess!

Book handling ought to be two things: It ought to be a sacrament and it ought to be a passion!

Perhaps, it would be if we only had the pleasure of having a book in our soiled hands once in every quarter of a century. I have read a story to the effect that in the Vatican at Rome there is a Prayer Room which is only opened once in every quarter of a century and then only a chosen few are permitted to enter this sacred room to pray.

The mere fact that this room is only opened every quarter of a century makes it a sacred place and a place to be entered with unsandaled feet and reverent mood.

I told this story to a Librarian once and that Librarian said in reply "I feel that way every time I enter the Library. Books are sacred things to me. Perhaps it is because I did not have so many of them in my youth. Perhaps it is because one book, Carlyle's "Sartor Resartus," changed my life, that I never lose my sense of reverence for books. They are sacred to me!"

"They would be as sacred as that unopened prayer room in the Vatican if we were privileged to read only one book in twenty-five years! Did you ever stop to think of how valuable a book would be to you if you were only privileged to open one once in every quarter of a century?"

"People would walk ten miles; fifty miles; a thousand miles to see that book; just to see it and touch it!"

"That was almost true in Lincoln's life!" added

my Librarian friend. "He walked miles every night to get a book to read and reading those few books in his early life without doubt gave Lincoln what you so fondly call the Big Boost!"

"I hadn't thought of that but I believe that it is true!" I responded. "I know that it was true in the life of Nathaniel Bowditch: I have recently read an old book called 'Turning Points in Successful Careers' and in the chapter on this great scientist, it says of his early boyhood:

" 'His employer lived in the house with Judge Ropes, who owned a good library for that day; and the judge permitted 'Nat' to take books from it whenever he wished. This was a great boon to the boy, and he made the most possible of this opportunity.' "

Later, as this fascinating book records, he came in contact with a larger Library in Salem. This Library opened his mind to the fact that there were finer books and instruments on mathematics and navigation in Europe than in America:

"But for this Library of foreign works, he might have remained content with inferior achievements. His gifted mind was waiting for larger opportunities; and here they were offered, and he accepted them without delay. This settled the fact that he would become the greatest mathematician and navigator of his times!"

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## 100 PLACE OF BOOKS IN THE LIFE WE LIVE

So it was that in this great scientist's life books gave the big boost!

"But why all this talk about the influence of books on human lives?" a teacher friend asked me a few days ago.

"Why? So that fellows like you are, may realize that every time he hands on a book, every time he persuades a father to buy a new book and put it on the family table or in the scanty family library, he may be giving the 'Big Boost' to some lad!"

I talked to him that way because I wanted to awaken in his soul; seeing that he was a High School teacher; the possibilities that were lying within his own grasp to change the entire lives of those young men and women who were in his classes.

"Have books ever done anything special for you?" he asked me cynically.

"They have done everything! To be specific, about eight years ago a preacher and lecturer, Dr. Lynn Harold Hough, then a teacher in Northwestern University, later president of this great educational institution, came to the Pacific Coast to give a series of lectures at a young people's gathering. His lectures were literally dripping with books! He talked a book language, not a dry, dead language; but a language that dripped human sweat, dripped human blood; shed human

tears; that had a light in it which shone upon every pathway and lighted up that path with what seemed to me to be a celestial light!"

"He was a Book-Reading Parson then; as you call them?" said my friend, the teacher.

"Yes, and after he came and went, he left another Book-Reading Parson behind!"

"Who was that?"

"I was the Book-Reading Parson whom Dr. Hough left behind!"

"Did it make any difference?"

"It was the big boost that I needed just at that time! Becoming a Book-Reading Preacher has remade my life! It has made me ten times as useful and it has made my life infinitely bigger!"

I was talking from my heart to my friend, the Teacher! I repeat it here in testimony for books; that when a man came along who was interested in helping other preachers and made me a Book-Reading Preacher, I say, without a single exception, that he contributed more to my own effectiveness as a minister than any single individual has contributed to my professional life!

And I have seen books give this Big Boost to many a preacher of my acquaintance! I have seen preachers who have become, almost overnight effective, popular preachers; who began to broaden out and become interesting to their audi-

ences just because they became Book-Reading ministers!

Heretofore, I have discussed the thought of the service that a preacher may render to his congregations and his city through Book Service to humanity! But now I am thinking of the service that books will render to him!

Just now as I write, I am thinking of a young fellow who was in Theological Seminary with me. He was brilliant in many ways and an unusually strong speaker; but he seemed suddenly to dry up after two or three years in the ministry.

"What was the matter?" you ask.

"No books! He thought that the day for books had passed. In fact he said so!"

"The time for books is past! The time for action has come!" That was his comment the day he graduated from the Seminary!

Then he became as dry as the Mojahave Desert!

Rumors came trickling through to me; that he was so discouraged with the ministry that he was thinking of giving it up. He had lost his crowds who came to hear him the first two years of his ministry! I wondered what had happened!

One day I ran across him in Boston.

He was bright and cheerful about the ministry! In fact he was filled with his old time enthusiasm and confidence. I told him of the rumors I had heard about his leaving the ministry!

He smiled and told me the whole story.

"Yes, that was true a year ago but now I've got the world by the tail swinging it around my head and having the time of my life! I never was happier in the ministry than I am now! I've got my crowds back, and the people seem to have new confidence in me!"

"What does it all mean?"

"Books! I quit reading! I used to say when I left school, 'The time for books is past! The time for action has come now!' I went on that theory for a few years! I worked my fool head off on committee meetings, organizing clubs, talking to pink teas; and for two years didn't read a book! My crowds began to drop off; my confidence began to leave me! I lost heart! I felt a lack of power! I didn't seem to have the authority!"

"So you are one of these fellows who thinks that a minister who is not a daily reader of books is lacking in punch, kick and authority?" I queried of him.

"Yes—that's a good theological figure of speech! At least it has the value of being easily understood even if it wouldn't pass the censorship of a Theological School!"

"I lost my juice when I quit reading books! I was dried up! I started in on O. Henry, and read every last one of his books! I needed O. Henry

to get me back in touch with city life! Then the desert of my ministry began 'to blossom as the rose' over night!"

"So you read O. Henry too do you?" I asked him.

"Nobody better to keep you in touch with life! Dean Michaeljohn, my old teacher in Brown, used to read detective stories at nights for relief from Philosophy! He is now the President of Amherst!"

Meeting this old Theological friend got me to thinking of the value of books to the minister himself! A previous article discussed the value that he may render to others through books!

So I got to looking over my ministerial friends who are eminently successful in the ministry!

I know the church at large very well. I started at the Atlantic sea-board and went across the country by correspondence and personal communication and I discovered that every single last man in my particular church who is occupying the larger pulpits of the church, is what we would call a "Book-Reading Preacher." I found one busy man who says that he reads a "Book a Day" and he is one of the busiest fellows I know.

"How do you do it?" I asked him.

"I get up at six o'clock and read two hours! Then I have breakfast and read another hour. That is my morning schedule of time for reading.

Then at night I read from ten to eleven! I average a Book a Day, counting books of poetry, fiction, theology and science! I mix 'em up a lot! But I average, and have for three years, a Book a Day!"

"I haven't time to read!" said a minister to me a while ago.

"You haven't time not to read!" I replied.

My friend, Edmund Vance Cook, has given me permission to quote him in this matter:

"You don't buy poetry: (Neither do I)

Why?

You cannot afford it? Bosh! you spend

Editions de luxe on a thirsty friend:

You can buy any one of the poetry bunch

For the price you pay for a business lunch!

Don't you suppose that a hungry head,

Like an empty stomach, ought to be fed?

Looking into myself, I find this true,

So I hardly can figure it false in you!"

"The old excuse that a minister can't afford books and hasn't the time are obsolete now!" said a Book-Parson friend to me awhile ago.

"Why?"

"Because he can't afford not to read; and he hasn't time to give up reading; for have you not heard the old adage: 'A Book in Time saves nine!'"

"Nine what? Nine stitches?"

"No, nine lives; nine dreams; nine hopes; nine aspirations; nine ambitions; nine sermons; nine churches; nine careers!"

Dr. Kuhns tells of finding in front of a book a sentence written by a man named John Brown. There is a thrill to this simple sentence that awakens in us a great resolve; those of us who have within our sphere of influence the lives of young people. We pray God that we may make the great book world so entrancing, so fascinating, so much of a land of adventure that the Youth that we influence will find a great eagerness in its soul for book reading. John Brown wrote these words in a book:

"I, John Brown, will buy good books, God helping me!"

When Youth gets the thrill of great books shot into his soul, he will be:

"All halo-girt with fancies of my own."

A knowledge of books will enable the preacher and teacher to catch the heart of Youth with a bait that he likes; the bait of Romance.

Let Youth discover, as did my friend, Dr. Kuhns, that one may not only find the tracings of all history in literature; the secret of all poetry, music, art; that one may not only find the theme of all Science as it develops; but best of all to Youth; in the field of literature if he reads widely

and carefully, he may find the red flower of Romance blooming along the river banks of literature.

Dr. Kuhns says:

“In books I see the development of sexual love from a mere thing of the senses to an uplifting experience that leads men to their highest powers; that love which transforms all nature and life, and sits enthroned beside the eternal laws. I see the innumerable symbols of the various phases of this universal passion: Helen, the type of the purely physical charm of woman; Penelope, the faithful wife and mother; Nausicaa, girlish and sweet in the innocence of her youthful charm; Tristan and Iseult, Francesca da Rimini, Romeo and Juliet; Beatrice, in whom the earthly and divine are mingled; and Laura, pure woman, yet a spirit too; and so on, down to the present age, when Browning makes love the great element which raises man to God himself.”





## **VII: BUILDING A BOOK MARKET**

## BOOKS!

Books are worlds where acons hide  
And the ancient gods abide;  
Books are reaches where there's room  
For mountain peaks to lift and loom;  
Continents where mountain ranges  
Mark the milestones and the changes;  
Books are desert gates that swing  
Shut upon some dust-strewn king;  
Books are far-flung heavenly plains  
Where an age-old comet flames;  
Books are fields of trampled sod  
Where free-booted Sages trod;  
Mighty trails down which the Sages  
Left their footprints through the ages;  
Books are imprints of dead ferns  
Where the world's wide highway turns;  
Creaking gates and cities—walled  
Where old sunset trumpets called;  
Minaret and tower and dome  
Crowning an Imperial Rome;  
Egypt, Athens, Babylon—  
Paged by some Rosetti Stone;  
Dancing girls with satin skin  
Henna-tinted, dwell herein;  
Romance, intrigue, murders, lust;  
Godly men and women—just;  
Priests and Prophets walk these pages;  
Puppets, Princes, Seers, and Sages.  
Worshippers at myriad shrines  
Pray and chant their singing lines;  
Minsters, temples, towers and spires  
Light their ancient altar-fires;  
Altar fires where still there clings  
Incense offered by dead kings.  
Books are flames that light the way  
To some God-illuminated Day!

## CHAPTER VII

### *Building a Book Market*

#### THE PUBLISHER AND BOOKS IN THE LIFE WE LIVE

The Book Man and the Parson were talking.

"More like an argument it seems to me!" said the Parson's wife after the dust had been cleared away and the remains gathered up in several baskets. And, be it said for the sake of accuracy, that the remains were not the remains of the Parson but the remains of the Book Man, for toward the close of the evening the Book Man admitted that the Book Publishers, Book Sellers and Book Advertisers had all been working at the wrong end.

"You're right! You're right. Be tanned, you're right!" said the Book Man and from his language it can be seen, even with half an eye, that he was not afraid to cuss a little in the presence of his friend the Parson.

"This 'Buy a Book a Week' isn't going to do the thing! You are working at the wrong end of the business," was the sentence that started it all.

"Then just tell us what you think is the right end of the Book Market cultivation."

"It's selling the idea of reading rather than the book itself. If you fellows would get busy and find a contact with the mediums that teach people actually to read, you would in the end reap a harvest of selling books that would astonish you. It's seed planting that you want to do. You plant the seeds of the reading habit and you'll reap the harvest of book markets."

"That sounds sensible even if it does come from a Parson," said the Book Man; who, in spite of the fact that he was a Book Man had more or less intelligence. He could still see light when it blazed full in his eyes. "Go on Brother! Go on! I'm listening with both ears and my cigar!"

"Sell the habit of reading to the people first and you'll sell books themselves later. You'll sell thousands where you sell hundreds now. Your good books will go into numerous editions rather than scrimping their way barely through the first edition."

"Aye, there's the rub! But how to turn the trick is the question. Teach us that and you're fortune is made, my boy. Teach us that and we'll crown you with a diadem of jewels before your time!"

"It's simple," replied the Parson, who was by way of being something besides a parson. He was interested in many things: folks, automobiles, newspapers, nature, schools and books.

"Say on!" replied the listening Book Man as the cool winds blew in off the lake through an open window where a lace curtain was fluttering against his face. "Say on!"

"How did Mr. Hoover go about getting the nation to save food in the war?"

"I do not know. All I know is that we saved."

"You do not know! Then I'll tell you. Mr. Hoover called to Washington a large group of preachers when the matter of food conservation was turned over to him."

"But what has that to do with books?" said the Book Man impatiently.

"That's just what's the matter with you Book Fellows. You haven't patience for the long look. You want to come to a sale too quickly. You are not willing to plant seed and let it have time to grow. You are not willing to draw your architectural plans for a Book Market first before you build. You want to do the thing on the 'Book a Week' basis all the time. You are impatient."

"But to you're story of how Hoover got the country to sacrifice food! To your story, narrator!"

"When Mr. Hoover had gotten these preachers together, he said something like this to us—for I happened to be one of the group that was called to Washington. He said, 'Gentlemen, we are in a world war. The winning of that war depends

largely on the United States. And the United States cannot win that war unless it sacrifices on food in order that we may send food to our allies. We cannot make a Democracy save food by forcing them. That is the glory of a Democracy. The only thing that will make them save food is a spiritual passion. That spiritual passion for sacrifice can be created in only one way. That is by the preachers and the churches of this Nation. If you men will go back to your churches and set flaming in the hearts of America a passion for sacrificing food we can get them to do it. Otherwise, we cannot.' Herbert Hoover was right. He went to the right source."

"But what has that to do with creating a market for books?" said the still impatient Book Man.

"It has this much to do with it. The Preacher in his pulpit is the real medium for building a book market for the future. He is the man of Books. Books are his natural habitat. That is the reason why you will find more sons of ministers in 'Who's Who in America' than the sons and daughters of any other profession. He may not have much money but he does have books. He lives and preaches and dreams in books. He knows books like you Book Fellows know the paper market and Time Tables. Books are his front yard and his back yard. Books fill his attic,

his study, his parlor, his tables, his automobiles, his—”

“Cellar!” added the Book Man with a grin.

“Exactly! At least in the sense that the Parson is one of the best sellers of books,” replied the preacher after which the Book Man did not attempt any more book puns.

“You are more right than you think. I have fifty parson friends and I know at least half of them who actually keep one or two books in the cellar in order to have them handy to the furnace so they can sit down a moment after fixing the fire at nights to read a moment while the smoke settles.”

“Better mediums for Reviews than Book Pages you’ll be saying next?”

“Indeed I will. I say it now. I say that I believe that it would be a more direct way of getting to a new reading market if Book Publishers and Book Sellers would introduce their wares more and more through preachers. I believe actually that the Book World is missing a good guess by not more and more sending their books to Preachers for review. I believe that they would get more actual results than in sending them to a Book Page Editor.”

“Why is this, my friend of the Pulpit?”

“It is because the word of a preacher in commendation of a book means more than the word of



a newspaper. We have gotten so that we distrust the average Book Page. It is done by men who do not know books. It is not done with spirit and soul. The average Book Review is dead and cold and lifeless. But the word of a preacher about a worth-while book is filled with passion. He preaches on that book with passion. It is a vehicle for his truth. It flames like a sword in his hands. His hearers go forth with a passion to tell their neighbors, and their office friends and their acquaintances about the book that 'Dr. Jones spoke about last night!' That book is talked about and propagated in exactly the same psychology that religion is propagated. Anything that has the church back of it flames into a crusade over night."

"But to accomplish that you will have to have all the books that we publish and sell, good books."

"And I reply to that, Mr. Worldly Wise Book Seller, that if you really want to SELL books, you'll have to have them good books."

"You mean sermons?"

"No, I mean great novels; novels with spiritual purpose in them. Novels with moral passion in them. Novels that deal with the thing that is most important to a human soul."

"Meaning?"

"Meaning the glorious romance of the regenera-

tion of a soul, the quest for decency and cleanness, the integrity of the home, the simple virtues of what Robert Service calls:

“ ‘The Ancient, outworn Puritanic traditions of right and wrong!’ ”

“How do you prove this vision of Idealism?”

“In several ways. I prove it by the Theater, I prove it by the Motion Picture World, I prove it by the book world of the past five years.”

“For instance, my friend Frederick Thompson, he who built the New York Hippodrome, he who rehabilitated Coney Island, he who put ‘Polly of the Circus’ on the stage, once said to me, ‘The people want clean amusement; at least ninety-eight per cent of them do. From a purely business viewpoint, the theatrical man who sees this will profit by it.’ ”

“But was your friend Fred Thompson right?”

“Ben Hur proves it. There is no drama that has lived so long! There is no play that has been seen by more people. Millions have seen it and millions shall yet see it. It is a perennial. ‘Way Down East’ is another proof that a great clean, human play will live forever. ‘The Miracle Man’ proves it in the world of the Motion Pictures. ‘The Miracle Man’ has made millions because it is a great story of regeneration. You

can trace this throughout the drama and picture world."

"And the book world?"

"It is the same. The books that live are the great spiritual productions. More copies of 'In His Steps' by Charles Sheldon have been sold in the last ten years than any other book in the field."

"Why?"

"Because good people had it in their hearts to talk about it. It was just like telling of a religious experience to them. When one has a religious experience of any kind, the first thing that he wants to do is to tell his friends about it. It is that way with a good book. There is a crusader's passion behind it."

"'Almost Thou persuadest me' my friend—" said the sacrilegious Book Man.

"The legend of Jesus about describes what I mean. Some one of the Disciples said to Jesus 'You have written nothing Master! You have not inscribed on the Paprys any of your great truths or a single word of your great Program. You have done nothing but tell it to us. Have you no other way to spread your Gospel?'"

"The Master looked down upon the Disciple who questioned Him and said 'I have no other way! If you fail me, all is lost. I have no other way.'"

"And the application to books—I must insist upon that Mr. Preacher?"

"The application? It is that the one thing that has been propagated until it has spread over the whole earth was spread by word of mouth. And that is just the value of getting your books into the hands and into the minds and into the passions of preachers, and from them into the hands and minds and passions of church people. It is a great wide field, as yet untouched. The Book World is just beginning to know that it is there. Church people, the minute they find a good book run with the 'Good News' of that book into the uttermost parts of their acquaintanceship; aye, even unto a stranger now and then to tell him about it. And verily does that stranger say to himself 'Since this human being is so stirred up about this book and since I know so little about books, I'll get this one and read it!' "

"Two things, my friend, you have said that are muchly worth while to me and I would thank you," said the Book Man. "One is that the Book World would do well to sell the idea of books for a while than to sell a book; and the other is that through the Preacher, and through the church the Book World could do this selling of the habit of reading and cultivate a new field."

"And how would you do this?" he added after a pause.

"First, I would get a list of the leading ministers of the country. I would send them my books just as I would the leading newspapers. Perhaps I would not make such a wide distribution but I would certainly feel that the investment of a book in a minister's study would bring good returns if that book had something worth while in its pages."

"Now take myself for illustration. I must frankly confess that my first interest in the Dramatic Book Sermon, of which you have heard me preach and speak often, came about in this way."

"Now a real plot enters into the tale of Books. Lay on, Macduff! Lay on! and damned be he who first cried, 'Hold enough!' I'm listening to the bitter end." It was the sarcastic Book Man speaking.

"William Allen White was on his way to France. 'In the Heart of a Fool' was just being published. He sent me a copy through his publishers. It was autographed in red ink. But it was autographed. That counted. It made an impression on me. Every man likes a book autographed by the author. I did not know Mr. White personally and that flattered me all the more. Then came a letter from the publishers saying that just before Mr. White had gone to Europe he had asked that a copy of his book be

sent to some of the leading ministers of the country—”

“Leading ministers—yah—and that got to your heart—” interrupted the ever cynical Book Man.

“It did—I must admit it—I am honest—which is more than some folks I know, about such a thing—especially since I was just a humble sort of a minister in a small church—but at least it served to make me read the book. I saw immediately that there was tremendous material in it for a swiftly moving, spiritual interpretation of modern industrial life in its relations to the church. I found a character in that book that was Christ in modern life and who, because he stood for Christian principles was at last actually crucified. It seized hold of my soul with its big brawny hands and I preached what I called ‘A Dramatic Book Sermon’ on it. I have been preaching them ever since. I have, up to this time, preached over a hundred. You know my hobby in the sermonic line. I needn’t talk of that here for we had gone over that in detail before. But I have never before told you the story of how I, a preacher, was converted to The Dramatic Book Sermon. You have now heard it. It was because an editor and a publisher and an author took the pains to send me a copy of a truly great book. I can directly trace the sale of over one hundred copies of that book to my influence.

Multiply one preacher by ten thousand preachers and figure the results for yourself."

"You're right! You're right! Be tanned you're right!" said the Book Man.

And thenceforth went out, and like the proverbial listener to sermons proceeded straightway not to do the thing that had been preached unto him. But instead, proceeded directly to put more money into, and more energy into the 'Buy a Book a Week' Campaign and kindred measures; and verily did he not succeed any more than he had before.

But some day some publisher and some Book Man will see the harvest fields ripe unto the harvest.

**VIII: BULGING BACK THE WORLD'S  
HORIZONS WITH BOOKS**



## THE LOOK OF A BOOK

I like the look  
And the feel of a book;  
These simple things  
The mailman brings  
All wrapped in neat  
Packages complete,  
And tied with cord:  
A ship, a song, a sword  
Hidden therein;  
Or mayhap souls with sin  
Shot through, in torn  
Garments clad, forlorn;  
Battered by Fate,  
Discouraged, desolate;  
Or might be men who grope  
'Mid dreams and hope;  
Men who dare  
The star-strewn air;  
Men who dive  
Fearless, alive,  
Where seas are deep  
And light-waves sleep;  
Lighted streams,  
Sky-born dreams  
Leap laughing out  
With burly shout  
From these rich shelves  
Like woodland elves.  
I like the look  
And the feel of a book.

## CHAPTER VIII

### *Bulging Back the World's Horizons with Books*

#### TRAVEL AND THE BOOKS IN THE LIFE WE LIVE

I remember distinctly when my father took me, one Saturday afternoon to the top of the old Indian Mound down in Moundsville, W. Va., and as I looked northward to the hills where the winding Ohio disappeared, and eastward to the blue horizon of the Ohio mountains, and south and west to where other mountains encircled that little town, I thought that it was a big world.

A few years later I was permitted to climb the hills that I had but glimpsed from the old Indian Mound, and I learned that, far beyond those West Virginian hills there were even higher mountains and wider horizons; I could see the far, blue and hazy mountain lines of the Allegheny Mountains on that clear afternoon.

I turned impetuously to my father and said, "Father, now that I have climbed the Indian Mound and these hills, when may I climb the mountains over there?"

He replied, "Some day! Some day, my boy, when your legs are stronger!"

Finally that day came, and I found myself standing on the topmost peak of the Allegheny Mountains.

But I knew on that memorable day, without my father telling me, that over farther west there were even higher mountains and wider horizons and I did not rest content until I had climbed the ancient and gigantic mountains of the Sierra Nevada Ranges in California.

Each range that I climbed, as the years went by opened wider horizons to me; each huge mountain peak, on whose top I finally stood, bulged back the horizons with its great, brawny, bronzed shoulders and made the world wider and bigger for me.

So it is with books!

Books bulge back the horizons of life for human beings!

Each book that a man reads makes his world larger! Each character that he meets in a book adds to that immortal group of soul-friends who shall forever, after meeting them, walk in and out through the doorways of his life!

Books are giant mountains with huge, brawny shoulders and they put their shoulders against the horizons of life and bulge them back for us!

This illustration: John Muir's books bulged

back the horizons of life for me until, through a single Summer's reading, I won for myself a group of chums and a new set of horizons. I chummed that Summer with Alaskan glaciers, with old Mt. Shasta, with gigantic Sequoia trees, with wide and flower-carpeted glacial meadows, with mountain passes, Lake Tahoe of the Skies, mountain goats, half domes, El Capitan, water falls and blue skies.

I became an out-of-doors man through the reading of one set of books; the twelve volumes of John Muir that Houghton Mifflin published a few years ago.

I shall be forever grateful to the man who introduced me to this set of books; grateful as a man is grateful who has his life suddenly made richer by the addition of a great, true friend; grateful, as a man must always be grateful when the horizons of his meager life are pushed back by a set of books, until life includes an entire new world. And especially is this true when this new world takes in mountains and rivers and waterfalls.

"Steep Trails," "The Cruise of the Corwin," "Our National Parks," "Mountains of California," "Travels in Alaska," "My First Summer in the Sierras," and "Boyhood Walk to the Gulf"; all opened a new world to me and that

new world was the world of nature; a world that all men need to get into more than they do.

This new acquaintanceship naturally led to other nature writers and before I knew it, I had gone back into the past and added Thoreau to my shelf of nature books; and then Fabre, and then Maeterlinck, and then Burroughs, and then Ernest Thompson Seton, and then Gene Stratton Porter, and then Bishop William A. Quaye, and then James Oliver Curwood.

This was an entirely new world which had, within a few years, opened to me through books. Books had bulged back the horizons of this wide world for me until I chummed with mountain peaks and mine eyes "had seen the glory of the coming of the Lord!"

A year ago the horizons of my world were pushed back by the brawny shoulders of a great book by O'Brien called "South Sea Shadows." For the first time in all my life I knew of these South Sea Islands. They had been there all the time but they were not included in my particular world at all. My world was too limited to include these islands.

But this great book made me see them. Then, as in the case of the new nature world that was opened up to me, I began to go back and I read all that Robert Louis Stevenson had written of these beautiful and romantic tropical lands.

Then came "Mystic Islands of the South Seas," and this second O'Brien book pushed the horizons even further back for me; after which I found Hester McQuarrie's "Tahiti Days" and on McQuarrie's magical carpet I was whisked into the very heart of this tropical South Sea city and lived for a few magical hours in that Garden of Eden described in "Tahiti Days."

Each friend introduced another kindred soul to me, as is the way of books, and then I was told of "Noa Noa" by Paul Gauguin, and read its scintillating pages. This was naturally followed by Maugham's "Moon and Sixpence"; and so in a few short months the horizons of my world were pushed back wider and wider until I included in my world every beautiful coral island of the South Seas.

An interest in the South Sea Islands naturally led to an interest in the great Oriental world and the Far East. The book stores were searched assiduously for books that dealt with Japan, China, the Philippines, Java, Borneo, Sumatra, Australia, Ceylon, India, and the Near East. Such books were easy to find.

Nearly every publisher in America has at some time or other sent forth fascinating books on these Oriental Far Eastern and Near Eastern lands. It is surprising what a wealth of fascinating ma-

terial American publishers have prepared for us on the Orient and the Far East.

Every great book of fiction adds new scenes, new friends, new characters, new ideas, new impulses, new ideals, new aspirations, new visions to one's life. One never reads a book of good fiction that his world is not made wider than it was before.

Some of the characters in these books of fiction will live with one forever to influence and oft-times to dominate his very life decisions! He will find himself acting under certain circumstances in life more or less as a certain character in a certain favorite book of fiction acted in a crisis.

No life can ever be the same after having read a great book of fiction like Victor Hugo's "Les Misérables," Tolstoy's "The Resurrection," George Eliot's "Romola" or "Silas Marner."

That is true with a thousand books that I might name here on these pages. One reads no great book of fiction either of ancient or modern days that his world is not made larger in that reading.

We who live in America and who know little of what is going on in the rest of the world; and who greatly need to catch the spirit of other nationals, may, if we read widely enough, even of those books which are published in America, catch

the dream that is in the souls of men of other nations.

Russia has been brought to our library doors for us by many thoughtful men and women. John Spargo, in several recent books has given us an insight into the industrial, social and political Russia, while Ernest Poole, of all modern fiction writers, has given us atmosphere that in "The Village" cannot but make us see somewhat of Russian life.

More recently, H. G. Wells has given us his impression of Russia in "Russia in the Shadows"; while we go back to Dostoivsky, Gorki, Kropotkin, Tolstoy, and others to get a glimpse of the old Russia of yesterday. But books are the arms and books are the shoulders that bulge back the horizons of Russian for us who cannot travel.

Norway and the northern countries have been brought very near to us during the past Winter through Bojer's novels, "The Power of a Lie," "The Great Hunger," "Life" and "The Face of the World." We have not read these books, primarily, for the purpose of catching the physical atmosphere of the blue-white mountain reaches, nor to catch a sight of the industrial and social life of city and village in the far north of Europe, but incidentally in reading these great pieces of strong fiction, the world horizons have been pushed back for us and we feel that we know



something of the play life, something of the physical surroundings, something of the city and village life, and something of the industrial and social problems of this far off country of the North.

Blasco Ibanez, in giving us a group of great and readable novels at the same time gives us an insight into the social, political, religious and national life in Spain in these modern days. We see the play life in "Blood and Sand," church and social life in "The Cathedral," country life in "The Cabin," the life of the Mediterranean Sea in "Mare Nostrum," and something of the social life in "The Dead Command."

Every great nation with a national literature has pictured its life for us through its great books and thus it has been and thus it ever will be, that for the most of us who are denied travel, we must have our world's horizons pushed back by and through books.

A man or a woman's world is made wider and finer when he knows the poets; both the poets of yesterday and the poets of today:

The poets, seared and worn,  
Fly-leafed and torn;  
From Chaucer down to Sill  
With many a throb and thrill;  
And many a wonder tome  
To all but few unknown;

My Goethe, Dante, Omar too;  
One likes the old, one likes the new.

And thus one finds a place  
For Riley's Hoosier face,  
For Fields and our Lanier  
Whose songs are sweet and clear;  
And all the rest  
From East to West.

A Hugo, Stevenson, Carlyle;  
And dear old Dickens with his smile;  
A touch of Ibsen and Tolstoy;  
A bit of Zola for alloy;  
Some Gibson, Lindsay, and Millay;  
Where shadows laugh and run and play;  
Joyce Kilmer with his man-like soul;  
Knowles, and Seegar! Call the roll  
Of those who died when youth was young  
And left their music still unsung;  
Our ancient Keats and Shelley too;  
Our Rupert Brookes; our old, our new;  
Carl Sandburg and the Vers Libre—  
"Spoon River's Bleak 'Anthology';  
Our Amy Lowell and her tribe  
The Orthodox must scold and chide;  
A thousand poems and a song;  
A hundred authors and a throng  
Of characters to love  
And hate! Ah, God above  
What thing could hold my wandering feet  
To live alone on my "Main Street"  
When all the world is calling me  
To "Come and see" to "Come and see!"

No man can read widely of the verse of yesterday and of today without his horizons being pushed back and his world made bigger and more beautiful.

When one gets hold of a book like "New Creations in Plant Life" by Harwood, but about Luther Burbank, the horizons of a new world are pushed back and life grows by leaps and bounds out toward the infinite.

"The Bee," by Maeterlink, and the Fabre books on the insect world—all of them popular in their treatment—bulge back the horizons of this already wide world until a preacher, or teacher, editor, or business man can have new worlds added every week to his living and his life.

Dr. Slosson's "Creative Chemistry" and his other popular books on scientific subjects open new vistas for those of us who do not claim to be scientists; who only claim to have a natural human's curiosity about other worlds than the world in which our business life happens to take us day by day.

We have adventuring souls and we do not want to be eternally confined to the narrow limits of our professional and business life; nor to the limited horizons of our home towns and our "Main Streets." We would be out where wild rivers run, and where white mountain peaks slit the skies, and where herds of wild cattle blacken

Argentinian plains, and wild tribes bask in the sunshine of tropical splendor, or languidly laze and doze under South Sea sunshine, or scale peaks of ice and snow where the poles rear their imaginary heads in the bleak northland. We would be adventurers but we are poor. We would be travelers but we have duties that anchor us close in the harbor of home. Then we travel through books. We adventure through great minds. The world is ours. There is no East and there is no West, no South and no North to us, for with books we have bulged back the horizons of life until there is nothing but the universe limiting our skies.

This is the glory and glow of books!

Books are trains!

Books are ships, adventure going!

Books are giant sky planes!

Books are giant shoulders pushing back the horizons!



**IX: BOOKS THAT BREED THE  
DREAM OF AGES**

## INTIMATES OF THE GREAT SPIRITS

"But by reading, we come to be the intimates of the great spirits of the world. The voices, the laughter, the jest, the boyish delight, the rollicking spirit of Charles Dickens, through Forster and Fields, become a part of our apparent experience. We know through books persons we have not met, nor seen, nor heard, as we know not our neighbors and friends. 'A Good book' to use the old but deathless phrase of Milton, 'is the precious life-blood of a master spirit.' In other words the author has pressed from his veins the express wine of his life. All the vigor which made him the man he was, he poured as a libation at our feet or emptied into our cup:

'Books are drenched sands  
On which a great soul's wealth lies, all in heaps,  
Like a wrecked argosy.'"

*Books and Life*, BISHOP WILLIAM A. QUAYLE.

## CHAPTER IX

### *Books that Breed the Dream of Ages*

#### VISIONS AND BOOKS IN THE LIFE WE LIVE

"Books breed the dream of Ages in a man's soul" said a preacher friend of mine, one day as we sat talking books in front of his wood-fire on a Winter evening.

"What is that? Say that again!" I said, startled at his great phrase.

He smiled that heart-warming smile for which he is famous; a smile that lights up his own face like the sunshine lights up a brooding forest and said "Books breed the dream of Ages in a man's soul!"

That phrase has been singing its way through my heart for many a moon, like the refrain of some great hymn or symphony.

"Books that breed the dream of Ages!"

It has a sweep to it, like the sweep of the wide Pacific sea. It has a tug to it like the tug of the Cross. It has an impelling heighth to it like the glory of an Everest. It has a sentinel-like challenge to it like the challenge of an El Capitan.



I was just at that time reading a book by Bishop Oldham, entitled "Thoburn—Called of God." It was the story of that little giant of the Missionary Movement of whom Robert Laidlaw said "He has more power in India than the Viceroy himself."

I had seen a man, small of stature, like Pope or Paul, walk across the horizons of Eternity in this book, like some huge spiritual giant. I had seen a mere boy go out to India impelled by a great phrase which he read; go out a boy; and grow under the nourishing impetus of a great and a difficult task in the Kingdom of God; until, as William Allen White says in "The Heart of a Fool," "He walked with God amid the stars."

This book took me me out of life and thrust my soul into Eternity; it lifted my sandaled footsteps from the byways of life and set them down again on the Road that is Forever. A book will do that very thing. I never miss reading a book about a great man. I have read ten of them the past year and among the ten were "The Autobiography of Andrew Carnegie," "The Americanization of Edward Bok;" two or three different lives of that great American, Theodore Roosevelt; but twice again I have read the story of Bishop Thoburn.

"Why have you been so stirred over that book about Thoburn?" asked a friend.

I did not answer him in exactly the phrase of

the title to this chapter but I might have done so and have told much truth.

"Why, because books like that breed in my soul the dream of ages; and being the fellow that I happen to be; with the limitations that I happen to have; and being inclined to stick pretty close to what Fitch calls "the frantic immediacy" of earth, I need greatly to read books "that breed the dream of ages" in my soul!

Then I told him about Bishop Oldham's book on Thoburn; about its vivid description of Bishop Thoburn's call to the ministry; about that even more vivid and thrilling interpretation of his call to the Mission field; and especially about that phrase which thrilled and lured and haunted young Thoburn, "Young men; undergraduates; hardly out of their teens have laid in Mission fields the foundations of Christian Empires!"

That was the phrase which set young Thoburn's soul on fire!

That was the phrase which was T.N.T. under his life; T.N.T. that finally exploded and blew him into an Empire Builder himself.

That was the phrase which shot his soul full of light.

"Laying the foundations of Christian Empires!" That phrase is like a great lifting force; a powerful magnet; a giant thought!

That phrase finally sent Bishop Thoburn to India!

That's what I mean by books that "Breed the Dream of Ages."

And the preacher who has the dream of ages in his soul will shoot that dream into the souls of his hearers. Those same hearers will be thrilled by his preaching and they will verily go forth from that place where his voice is heard with a sense of bewildering music in their souls; with the feeling that they have been listening to a whisper down the wind of Eternity; that they have been living in the Ages rather than in the Age; and they will say unto each other as they go out of that Temple of worship, "Did not our hearts strangely burn within us while he talked with us along the way and opened unto us books, and THE Book; and led us along the wide ways of Eternity?"

Dr. Hutton speaks in one of his great books about the "Sense of Sin." I referred to this phrase last Summer when I had the privilege of a week's visit with him at Lakeside where we were both giving morning Bible lectures.

I had been sitting at the same table with him for three days and we had talked Russian literature, English Preachers, Browning, America and—

But I can best explain what I am trying to

say in this way. One morning I wanted to tell Dr. Hutton what the visit with him had meant to me. I was trying to hunt for a phrase that would sum it all up. I remembered his own phrase "The Sense of Sin." We were walking along the lake. It was a beautiful morning.

"Dr. Hutton," I said "You have given me in these few days' personal contact with you a new Sense of Eternity!"

"That is a great gift! I feel humbled that I have been able to do that thing for you! Thank you for telling me. My heart sings to have the knowledge that I can give anybody a new 'Sense of Eternity'!"

And that is exactly what Dr. Hutton's books do for me. Take his two latest books "The Proposal of Jesus" and "That the Ministry Be Not Blamed" and they give one a sense of Eternity; a sense of the Eternal worth-whileness of preaching the Gospel of Christ; a sense of the Eternal significance of the message that Jesus brought; and a sense of the Eternity that is in our tasks in the ministry. In other words, reading great books such as great men like Dr. Hutton write "Breeds the Dream of Ages" in our souls.

Sir John Herschel sums up just what I want to say at this point and does it in such commanding language that I hasten to summon his great voice in testimony that books do breed the dream

of ages in a human soul, be that soul a child's soul, the soul of a youth, the soul of a preacher, a teacher, a parent or an editor:

"Give a man a taste for books, and the means of gratifying it, and you can hardly fail of making a happy man. You place him in contact with the best society in every period of history, with the wisest, the wittiest, with the tenderest, the bravest, and the purest characters who have adorned humanity. You make him a denizen of all nations, a contemporary of all ages."

That last phrase is the Trumpet sound that I want to get into the hearts of my readers.

"YOU MAKE HIM A DENIZEN OF ALL NATIONS, A  
CONTEMPORARY OF ALL AGES."

In the words of Francis Thompson: a prolific book reader becomes one of those rare souls who can hear:

"Trumpet sounds from the hid battlements of Eternity."

Lincoln belonged to the ages long before Stanton spoke those immortal words over his dead body five minutes after death had come to him.

"Now he belongs to the Ages."

This was true of Lincoln long before he died. It was true of him because he lived in the ages

through great books, as I have shown in another chapter.

Oscar Kuhns in his book on literature called "A One-Sided Autobiography" says:

"And thus I came to see that literature in general was not a mere agglomeration of books, written by chance and without any interrelation, the flotsam and jetsam of the stream of time, but an ever-deepening and widening stream itself, flowing down the centuries; and that it was my duty as a teacher, my pleasure as an individual, to trace the course of this stream of literature, striving to understand the various influences that broaden and deepen it, and change its direction from time to time."

This writer comes to the commendable conclusion that he can never expect to understand Rome and the Age of Rome unless he knows Virgil; that he cannot expect to know the Middle Ages and the Renaissance unless he knows Dante on the one hand, or Petrarch, Montaigne, and Shakespeare on the other; that one cannot expect to understand fully Puritanism without knowing Milton or to understand Milton without knowing the story of Puritanism; nor could one expect to know what Kahn calls "The agonies and despair" of Tennyson and Matthew Arnold without understanding the expansion of science in the nineteenth century.

Yes, great books give one a sense of the Ages; a sense of Eternity. They breed Eternity in a human soul.

So, one can, "with one stroke of the paddle" in a great book leave behind him all of the petty things of the present Age to live in the spirit of the Ages. Dr. Kuhn quotes Emerson:

"With one stroke of the paddle he left the village politics and personalities behind, and passed into a delicate realm of sunset and moonlight, too bright almost for spotted man to enter without novitiate and probation."

#### BOOKS THAT BREED THE DREAM OF AGES

Book that breeds the dream of ages

Let me live my life in thee;

Let me walk where ancient sages

Shot the skies with liberty!

Book that sowed the seed of dreaming

In the soil of æons old;

Let me live within thy gleaming

Pages rich with gold

Book that pours a stream of power

Down the mountains of the past

Let me live my little hour

Where the ancient ages last!

Book that lights the flame of living

All along the world's highway;

Let me feel Thy lamplight giving  
Brighter luster to the day!

Books that set new stars to gleaming  
In the darkest midnight sky;  
Let me live within thy dreaming;  
Live in light and let me die!

Books that lift like snow-white mountains  
Where may climb the valiant few;  
Let me plunge into the fountains;  
Wash me, cleanse me, through and through!

Books that made our mighty Lincoln  
Books that set the vision there;  
Books that wrought from common homespun  
Our benign Philosopher!

Truly great books made "Our Mighty Lincoln." The influence of great books in his great life cannot be estimated and cannot be over-estimated.

Someone has said "He might have been a common Illinois farmer if he had not had contact with great books in the formative period of his eventful life."

Indeed, it is fascinating to trace the influence of books in the lives of two great American presidents; men of different types but great world-men just the same.

Therefore, in the next two chapters of this book I have chosen to give an estimate of the part that



books played in the lives of Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt.

Linking the verse which appears just above with the next chapter is a simple thing. Indeed I wish to link the entire book up with the two following chapters and let them focus the thought of the whole. The lives of these two great American presidents will serve as illustrations of all that I have said in the preceding chapters. Now to the place that books played in the life that Lincoln lived.

**X: THE PLACE OF BOOKS IN THE  
LIFE OF LINCOLN**

## THE OPEN DOOR INTO THE GREAT LIFE

"Reading, then, is the open door into the great life of the world. Through it we know the history of forgotten centuries and become the intimates of immortal spirits. It is the pre-eminent instrument of culture, and, because of this unique pre-eminence and worth, is an important subject of consideration. Bacon has told us that 'Reading makes a full man.' It cultivates, gives stores of knowledge, supplies background to figure, puts a man with his back against the centuries, and his face fronting all the future. He has taken history into his constitution, so that it is as if a man had lived from the world's morning to this high noon. It is the knowledge thus supplied which, properly considered, destroys individual insularity and creates a man a cosmopolitan."

*Books and Life*, BISHOP WILLIAM A. QUAYLE.

## CHAPTER X

### *The Place of Books in the Life of Lincoln*

"Which is the strongest poem of all the thousands that have been written on Lincoln?" I heard a great Lincoln lover ask Mr. Fay, the keeper of the Lincoln Memorial Tomb at Springfield this Summer when I was going over what I call "The Lincoln Trail" through Springfield.

The visitor named several great poems.

"No!" said the little man with a twinkle in his eyes.

"What is then the strongest and shortest poem that fully expresses the life of Lincoln?" queried the visitor who had boasted just a few minutes before, that he knew all of the literature on Lincoln.

"It was written by Joaquin Miller a few years before his death at my request and I have it here in Miller's own handwriting."

The little old man reached into a sacred treasure vault and pulled out his Miller file and sure enough, there was a strikingly strong, unique and amazingly short poetical summary of the

great characteristics of Lincoln. So far as I know, this poem on Lincoln has never been published before:

## LINCOLN

By Joaquin Miller

"The strength of Hercules;  
The sense of Socrates!"

"Lincoln somehow seems a part of all great literature!" said the keeper of this sacred shrine.

"In what way do you mean? Do you mean that he steeped himself in great literature?"

"Yes, but I mean something more than that."

"And what may that something more be?"

"I mean that he wrote great literature."

"You are right! And I'll add another thought and that will complete the Lincoln Trilogy of Literature."

"Add it!" said this little thin faced Oliver Wendell Holmes fellow with a kindly smile. We had come to be chums in three minutes; although total strangers before; through our common love of Lincoln and our common love of Literature. What more natural than that, we two, with these kindred hobbies, should be linking them together and talking about "Lincoln and Literature"?

"I'll add the third division of the Lincoln Trilogy of Literature. It is the great mass of

literature which has been written *about* him and inspired by his life."

"That's a great Trilogy!" added my friend. "The Trilogy of the Literature in which he steeped his life and thinking; the literature that he wrote himself; and the literature that has been written about him since his death."

And so it is that I make bold to add to the innumerable Lincoln chapters this one on "The Lincoln Trilogy of Literature."

#### THE LITERATURE LINCOLN LIVED

Books made up Lincoln's High School and College, as every American schoolboy knows.

I'll wager that one could find few boys and girls in our American schools who could not name off-hand the books in which Lincoln lived as a boy; and few there are who do not know the romantic story of Lincoln's eagerness to get an education through reading great and good books.

In recent years we have heard constantly of Dr. Elliot's "Shelf of Books" put in a dozen different variations. We have heard of that "Shelf" of books which Roosevelt always carried with him even on his hunting trips into darkest Africa and South America; the classics that he always wanted with him. We have heard of various selections of a short shelf of books that were guaranteed to educate any man who would

read them. But neither Dr. Elliot nor Roosevelt were the originator of the "Short Shelf of Books." That was done by Abraham Lincoln more than three-quarters of a century ago and done through a great necessity.

Ida M. Tarbell says of this shelf of Lincoln books:

"His stock of books was small, but he knew them thoroughly, and they were good books to know; the Bible, 'Æsop's Fables,' 'Robinson Crusoe,' Bunyan's 'Pilgrim's Progress,' a 'History of the United States,' Weem's 'Life of Washington'."

Miss Tarbell gives in a footnote a fascinating and thrilling sidelight on Lincoln's character and at the same time a delightful sidelight on his experience with books:

"The first authorized sketch of Lincoln's life was written by the late John L. Scripps, of the Chicago *Tribune*, who went to Springfield at Mr. Lincoln's request, and by him was furnished the data for a campaign biography. In a letter written to Mr. Herndorn after the death of Lincoln, which Herndorn turned over to me, Scripps relates, that, in writing his book he stated that Mr. Lincoln as a youth read Plutarch's 'Lives.' This he did, simply because, as a rule, every boy in the west in the early days did read Plutarch. When the advance sheets of the book reached

Mr. Lincoln, he sent for the author and said gravely: 'That paragraph wherein you state that I read Plutarch's 'Lives' was not true when you wrote it, for up to that moment in my life I had never seen that early contribution to human history; but I want your book, even if it is nothing but a campaign sketch, to be faithful to the facts; and in order that the statement might be literally true, I secured the book a few weeks ago, and have sent for you to tell you that I have just read it through.' ' ' "

The story that used to thrill us in our boyhood days was the story of how Lincoln used to walk for several miles to borrow books from a friend's library and then, after he had read them how he would walk back through the heat of Summer, and the cold of Winter, to return these precious possessions.

Those who knew him, tell the story of how, when he plowed corn in the field he always had one of these borrowed books with him and at the end of each row he would stop and read while the horses rested.

Miss Tarbell tells of how one day Captain John Lamar, one of the few people left in Centryville who remembered Lincoln, was walking along the road and saw a boy sitting on the old-fashioned rail fence reading a book. His father remarked to him: "John, look at that boy yonder, and



mark my words, he will make a smart man out of himself. I may not see it but you'll see if my words don't come true!"

That boy who sat on the rail fence was Lincoln.

Judge John Pitcher of Rockport, Indiana, gave Lincoln free access to his great library after he was eighteen years of age.

One writer tells of how Lincoln "walked twenty miles from New Salem to Springfield to borrow law books from John T. Stuart."

The pictures of Lincoln that are burned with great vividness into our American minds are the pictures of Lincoln lying on his stomach in front of a great open fireplace reading. Another picture that history records for us is that of Lincoln lying under a great tree following the shade around the tree, reading a book all day long.

Lincoln's early books were few, but as Miss Tarbell says, they were great books.

His speeches, his letters, and his conversation throughout his life time were flowers blossoming out of the rich soil of the Bible and these few great books in which he lived as a boy.

His figure of speech, his simplicity of expression, his dignity of language, his loftiness of symbol are all due to his having saturated himself with the language of the Bible.

The literature of the Bible was Lincoln's everyday speech!

## THE LITERATURE WRITTEN ABOUT LINCOLN

Each year produces its mountain-high pile of Lincoln literature; some of it new and brilliant; some of it not so new and not so worth while. But all of it somehow finds a reading public.

This great production of Lincoln literature is not confined to America either as is illustrated by the fact that one of the most authentic lives of Lincoln that has ever been written was written by Lord Charnwood; and that recently the only great drama interpreting the life of Lincoln has been written by an English playwright, John Drinkwater.

In a most beautiful and universal fashion, indeed, is the greatness of Lincoln permeating the heart of the whole wide world. I have just returned from a trip around the world, traveling 55,000 miles in a year's time. When I was in Korea, the great Independence movement was at its glorious height. I talked with Young Koreans of the educated class and there was scarcely a conversation that I did not discover that the "Great Heart" whom they were following, the ideal that they were enshrining in their dreams, was that of our martyred Lincoln. I found this same thing true in the great Student Movement in China, one of the most powerful social and political movements in the world today.

These young Chinese students know the history and life of Lincoln as few American boys know it and Lincoln is the man they quote constantly in their fiery speeches on street corners. I know this same thing is true in the Philippine Islands where the young students place Lincoln even above their national idol, Jose Rizal. Russia has enshrined Lincoln in its great groping soul. It is significant that during the past year in two great English cities two great bronze statues of Lincoln have been unveiled; the St. Gaudens statue in London, and the Barnard statue in Manchester. The whole wide world is accepting the tradition of Lincoln's greatness and the whole wide world is enshrining Lincoln in its heart of hearts.

And naturally this is finding expression in literature that is being written about Lincoln everywhere; the outstanding illustration being the Drinkwater Drama and the Charnwood Life of Lincoln.

In America, every year see the publication of a new Lincoln Literature.

In the world of verse and poetry alone, the amount of literature written about Lincoln is appalling.

Hundreds of books of Lincoln poetry have been issued by publishing houses and every February sees both the great and the humble poets of

America trying to express some phase of his character in verse.

Mr. Oldroyd, owner of the house in which Lincoln died in Washington, D. C., some years ago issued what he called "The Poets' Lincoln." In selecting one hundred poems for this book, he selected from one thousand poems. This is an illustration of the almost numberless poems that have been written about Lincoln.

"The Book of Lincoln," written or compiled by Mary Wright Davis and published by the George H. Doran Company is one of the most useful of the hundreds of books published on Lincoln.

Most of it is made up of the division called "Lincoln in Verse." It is a marvelous thing that an entire life history of a great man can be traced out accurately in the poems that have been written about him. The chapter headings of this book are: "The Source of Lincoln," "The Mother of Lincoln," "To President Lincoln," "The First American," "Gettysburg Ode," "Lincoln Mourned," "Lincoln's Grave," "Lincoln's Memorial," "The Living Lincoln," "Lincoln's Centenary and other Birthdays," "Washington and Lincoln" and "Miscellanies."

When one stops to think that in this book Lincoln's entire life can be traced in truly great poems written about him, it is a startling thought. No

character in all the world's history has had his life so completely interpreted by so many varied authors; all in verse.

The great poems on Lincoln have been written by Edwin Markham, Walt Whitman, Vachael Lindsay, Joaquin Miller and others.

The great lines that stand out are:

Markham's:

"And leaves a lonesome place against the sky."

Whitman's:

"Captain! Oh my Captain!"

Vachael Lindsay's:

"Would I might rouse the Lincoln in you all!"

The Library of Congress contains over fifteen hundred books written on Lincoln and this list is increasing every year. These books have been written in nearly every language on the face of the earth.

America has produced several great histories of Lincoln's Life, among the most useful being the Nicolay and Hay books, from the group of earlier writers and the Ida M. Tardell two-volume history of the later writers.

Several edited books on Lincoln's yarns and stories have been issued, one of these being McClures and another good one being "Lincoln's Own Stories" by Anthony Gross and published by Harpers.

Books on Lincoln's Religion, his viewpoint on

Prohibition and a score of great problems have been issued. Only this year the Abingdon Press issues a book on "Lincoln and Prohibition." This same press a few years ago published a book of Lincoln Memorial Addresses called "Our Martyr President." "Abraham Lincoln the Christian," the author of which is William J. Johnson, is also issued by the Abingdon Press as well as a book on "Lincoln's Gettysburg Address" written by Orton H. Carmichael which is an attempt to set this great address in its proper perspective and give all of the facts incident thereto for posterity. Even so slight a contact with Lincoln as a child being kissed is cause for writing a book as the editors of the Abingdon Press thought when they gave us a book entitled "When Lincoln Kissed Me."

Dr. Barton's book on "The Paternity of Lincoln" is one of the recent useful books which clears up forever an uncertain tradition that surrounded the President. This book is issued by the George H. Doran Company. "The Soul of Ann Rutledge" by Bernie Babcock, is published by Lippincott.

Literally hundreds of small books of the gift type have been published and hundreds of thousands have been sold. Among these are such books as "The Perfect Tribute" by Mary Shipman Andrews published by Scribners. This book has been the most popular of the pocket sized books

about Lincoln. "The Counsel Assigned" is another of this same writer's booklets on Lincoln from the Scribner Press. "The Toy Shop" by Margaret Spalding Gerry published by Harpers has sold many editions. "Father Abraham," "He Knew Lincoln," and a half dozen small gift books about Lincoln by such writers as Ida M. Tarbell, Eleanor Atkinson; "Lincoln's Love Story," "Benefits Forgot" by Honore Willsie, published by Frederick Stokes; "The Bust of Lincoln" by James Francis Dwyer, published by Doubleday, Page and Co.; and hundreds of others illustrate the prolific production of this type of literature *about* Lincoln.

In addition to poems, hymns and songs; the gift books and the more serious discussions of his Religion, his views on Prohibition and stories about him either imaginative or fiction; there have been several wonderful novels written surrounding his fascinating life; the most recent and most interesting of them all being, Irving Bacheller's "A Man For the Ages."

This might be continued almost indefinitely but I have given illustrations of the outstanding types of Literature about Lincoln.

#### THE LITERATURE HE WROTE HIMSELF

Lincoln was unconsciously a poet. I mean by that that he was so saturated with the Bible that

he talked in the language of Psalms, and more or less in the form of the poetry of Psalms. An illustration of this startling fact is afforded by taking his beautiful prose speeches and putting them into the following form. It will be noticed that even an unconscious effect of rime is illustrated in the two middle lines of this quatrain taken from the Gettysburg address:

“But in a larger sense  
We cannot dedicate,  
We cannot consecrate,  
We cannot hallow this ground.”

The speech itself opens with poetry in that marvelous line:

“Fourscore and seven years ago”

There is a poetic sweep, rhythm and flow to that opening line which swings like mighty music.

A sense of rime and rhythm is echoing in the following four lines:

“Fondly do we hope,  
Fervently do we *pray*  
That this mighty scourge of war  
May speedily pass away!”

And what beautiful blank verse there is here:

“With malice towards none,  
With charity for all;



With firmness in the right  
 As God gives us to see the right  
 Let us strive on to finish  
 The work which we are in;  
 To bind up the nation's wounds;  
 To care for him who shall have borne  
 The brunt of the battle;  
 And for his widow and his orphans,  
 To do all that may achieve and cherish  
 A just and lasting peace  
 Among ourselves  
 And with all nations."

That ever buoyant and bubbling humor, which, all through his life, like a perpetual saving spring of grace swept through the sad years of his existence is illustrated in the following verse which was found in his schoolboy notebook according to Miss Tarbell:

"Abraham Lincoln,  
 His hand and pen—  
 He will be good, but  
 God knows when."

In a friend's notebook, he wrote:

"Good boys who to their books apply  
 Will all be great men by and by."

I find two or three avowedly and deliberately metrical pieces written by Lincoln. Here is one on a "Maniac:"

"But here's an object more of dread  
Than aught the grave contains—  
A human form with reason fled  
While wretched life remains.

"When terror spread and neighbors ran  
Your dangerous strength to bind,  
And soon a howling, crazy man,  
Your limbs were fast confined;

"How then you strove and shrieked aloud,  
Your bones and sinews bared;  
And fiendish on the gazing crowd  
With burning eyeballs glared.

"And when at night the drear and long  
Time soothed thy fiercer woes,  
How plaintively thy mournful song  
Upon the still night rose!

"I've heard it oft as if I dreamed,  
Far distant, sweet and lone,  
The funeral dirge it ever seemed  
Of reason, dead and gone!"

Consciously and unconsciously, Lincoln was a poet. He not only deliberately wrote verse in rhythm and rime, but he wrote it even more beautifully in his unconscious moments when in his letters and his speeches he rose to the sublime. If the editor finds room for it in this chapter, I have taken the suggestion of another writer, Marion Mills Miller, in "The Poets' Lincoln,"

who has arranged the speech at Gettysburg in verse form. The reader will notice how almost Biblical it sounds in its simplicity, brevity and beauty of expression:

“Fourscore and seven years ago  
Our fathers brought forth  
Upon this continent  
A new nation,  
Conceived in liberty,  
And dedicated to the proposition  
That all men are created equal.”

Following this sweeping and beautiful introduction comes the body of that wonderful speech, each line of which can be arranged into beautiful blank verse, but the conclusion is the part that mounts to the highest heights of verse:

“That from these honored dead  
We take increased devotion to that cause  
For which they gave  
The last full measure of devotion;  
That we here highly resolve . . .  
That these dead shall not have died in vain;  
That this nation, under God,  
Shall have a new birth of freedom;  
And that government of the people,  
By the people and for the people,  
Shall not perish from the earth!”

In Osborn H. Oldroyd's recently published book, "The Poets' Lincoln," will be found a

letter from Mr. Lincoln to William Johnson, his friend, in which he writes as follows concerning the verses printed below: "The piece of poetry of my own which I alluded to I was led to write under the following circumstances. In the Fall of 1844, thinking I might aid some to carry the state of Indiana for Mr. Clay, I went into the neighborhood in that state in which I was raised, where my mother and only sister were buried, and from which I had been absent about fifteen years. That part of the country is within itself as unpoetical as any spot of the earth; but still seeing it and its objects and inhabitants aroused feelings in me which were certainly poetry; though whether my expression of those feelings is poetry is quite another question."

"My childhood's home I see again,  
And sadden with the view;  
And still, as memory crowds my brain  
There's pleasure in it too.

"O Memory! thou midway world  
'Twixt earth and paradise,  
Where things decayed and loved ones lost  
In dreary shadows rise,

"And freed from all that's earthly vile,  
Seem hallowed, pure and bright,  
Like scenes in some enchanted isle  
All bathed in liquid light.

"As dusky mountains please the eye  
When twilight chases day;  
As bugle-notes, that, passing by,  
In distance die away;

"As, leaving some grand waterfall,  
We, lingering, list its roar—  
So memory will hallow all  
We've known but know no more.

"Near twenty years have passed away  
Since here I bid farewell  
To woods, and fields, and scenes of play,  
And playmates loved so well.

"Where many were, but few remain  
Of old familiar things;  
But seeing them to mind again  
The lost and absent brings.

"I hear the loved survivors tell  
How nought from death could save,  
Till every sound appears a knell,  
And every spot a grave.

"I range the fields with pensive tread,  
And pace the hollow rooms,  
And feel companion of the dead—  
I'm living in the tombs."

Letter writing has formed a certain definite part of all literature, the outstanding illustrations being Paul's Epistles in the New Testament. In

every life of any great man, such as have been so frequently published, his letters form a very real part of the interpretation of that man's life. But as a piece of real literature in letter writing; as an illustration of the great classic of letter writing, since Paul's Epistles I doubt if literature contains a greater illustration than the Bixby letter. It is truly great literature:

"Dear Madam: I have been shown in the files of the War Department a statement of the Adjutant-General of Massachusetts that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle. I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering to you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save. I pray that our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altars of freedom."

His speeches stand, as do his letters, as great monuments of universal literature. The Gettysburg address, from which I have quoted in this article shall go down in the history of literature to stand side by side with the great classic examples of literature in this field.

And so it has been that Lincoln not only lived

great literature, had great literature written about him, but he wrote great literature himself.

And I close as I began by quoting the greatest and strongest and shortest poem that was ever written on Lincoln; a hitherto unpublished contribution to Lincoln Literature which I make through the courtesy of the keeper of the Lincoln Memorial in Springfield; Mr. H. W. Fay; that short and yet pregnant poem by Joaquin Miller:

LINCOLN

"The strength of Hercules;  
The sense of Socrates!"

**XI: THE PLACE OF BOOKS IN THE  
LIFE OF THEODORE ROOSEVELT**



## BEATITUDES OF BOOKS

"Looking back upon the mercies of a mercy-laden life, I esteem one of my most signal blessings this—that my Father's house was a race of reading men and women. Books have always been beatitudes in my family; and the love of books which I received 'by tradition from my fathers' has been the joy and gladness of my days. It has often made the wilderness to blossom as the rose to me, and in the desert the waters have broken out as a surprise of delight and refreshment. I record this with warmest thankfulness to the 'God of every kind of grace!'"

*Stars of Retrospect*, DINSDALE T. YOUNG.

## CHAPTER XI

### *The Place of Books in the Life of Theodore Roosevelt*

"What was the most marvelous thing about Roosevelt?"

A group of writers and newspaper men were sitting in a hotel room enjoying their cigars while they waited for a great National Convention to produce something exciting enough to send over the wires.

It was natural that they should be talking about that stalwart figure of American politics; he who had made and unmade a great party of his own. The glory and glamor of the "old days" was on every face. These newspaper men were idealists at heart and the glow of that great face still shone along the pathway and the shadow of that great figure still made those who followed him look like pygmies.

"The most remarkable thing about Roosevelt to me was the fact that, in the midst of his strenuous duties, national and international; he always had time to write friendly, earnest, and helpful letters to every one of his children," said

a fatherly looking correspondent of a New York newspaper. Roosevelt's letters to his children had just been published.

"The most remarkable thing about him to me was his interest in botany and birds. He had almost a scientific knowledge of birds, insects and flowers. I never saw anything like it among the great men of the earth in my day of interviewing," said a younger man from a Chicago syndicate.

"His interest in sports seems to me to be one of the most characteristic things about him. Usually, when a man gets to the age of Roosevelt and is elected to a high office, he feels that he must, so to say, 'Put away childish things'; but it was his glory and distinction that he did not put away sports. That is why he kept his eternal youth. When the rest of us were getting so fat-bodied and so fat-souled that we could barely run for a street car without heart trouble, he was hunting wild game in Africa or hunting a wilder river in South America. That was the eternal spirit of youth in the old rascal. That is why we all loved him to the end, in spite of our political differences." These comments came from a young sport writer of a Kansas City paper.

"But you fellows haven't struck what seems to me to be the most remarkable thing of all about Roosevelt," said a young author whose books

were known all over America and England at that time and more so since this conversation took place.

"What meanest thou, Brother Scribbler of great books?" asked a friend.

"It was the variety and number of books that Roosevelt managed to read in a week's time. I never saw anything like it. I had been called to the White House for lunch. He had read my first book and saw possibilities in it. He invited me to lunch with him. He had not only read my book, but it seemed to me that he had read every book of every known author in America. He had at his tongue's end a personal knowledge of modern authorship that appalled me. He not only knew the classics but he knew the moderns."

"I said to him, 'Mr. Roosevelt, how under the sun do you get time to read so much with the affairs of state burdening you down as they do?' "

"He replied, 'I make it a point never to go to bed without having read a book that day. Usually I have to steal the time just before I turn in, but often in between interviews, when I am supposed to be concerned with the affairs of state I pick up a book and read a chapter before I take up the next interview.' "

Roosevelt's knowledge of books and the part that books took in his life from early boyhood days to the end make a spiritedly interesting chap-

ter in his strenuous life. One cannot pick up a single book of the many that have been written about him, that one does not see the influence and the dominant place of books in his life.

From the beginning to the end of the book written by his talented sister, Corinne Roosevelt Robinson, we hear the sweet rustle of the leaves of opening and opened books. We read of "The Dresden Literary American Club" of their childhood days when young Roosevelt was not only writing and illustrating his own stories with strange pictures such as he later drew when he wrote letters to his children; but we also read of the influence of the literature of the past on his youthful life.

But perhaps the most vivid and interesting illustration of the influence of books in his life is found in the chapters on Page 251 in this book. These chapters are devoted to "Home Life in The White House."

One quiet evening when they were having a family dinner together in the White House, Mrs. Robinson turned to him and said, "Theodore, I want to give you a *real* present before you go away. What do you think you would like?" His eyes sparkled like a child who was about to receive a specially nice toy, and he said, 'Do you really want to make me a *real* present, Pussie? I think I should like a pigskin library.' "

“ ‘A Pigskin Library,’ I said in astonishment, ‘What is a Pigskin Library?’ He laughed and said ‘Of course, I must take a good many books; I couldn’t go anywhere, not even into the jungles of Africa without a good many books. But, also, of course they are not very likely to last in ordinary bindings, so I want to have them all bound in pigskin, and I would rather have that present than any other.’ ”

Mrs. Robinson says that the next day he dictated a list of the books that he wanted and then added a few more in his own handwriting and this list she gives:

#### BOOKS IN THE PIGSKIN LIBRARY

Bible.

Apocrypha.

*Borrow*: Bible in Spain.

Zingali.

Lavengro.

Wild Wales.

The Romany Rye.

*Shakespeare*.

*Spenser*: Fairie Queen.

*Marlowe*.

*Mahan*: Sea Power.

*Macaulay*: History.

Essays.

Poems.

*Homer*: Iliad.

Odyssey.

La Chanson de Roland.  
 Nibelungenlied.  
*Carlyle*: Frederick the Great.  
*Shelley*: Poems.  
*Bacon*: Essays.  
*Lowell*: Literary Essays.  
                     Biglow Papers.  
*Emerson*: Poems.  
*Longfellow*.  
*Tennyson*.  
*Poe*: Tales.  
                     Poems.  
*Keats*.  
*Milton*: Paradise Lost (Books I and II).  
*Dante*: Inferno (Carlyle's translation).  
*Holmes*: Autocrat.  
                     Over the Teacups.  
*Bret Harte*: Poems.  
                     Tales of the Argonauts.  
                     Luck of Roaring Camp.  
*Browning*: Selections.  
*Crothers*: Gentle Reader.  
                     Pardoner's Wallet.  
*Mark Twain*: Huckleberry Finn.  
                     Tom Sawyer.  
*The Federalist*.  
*Bunyan's* Pilgrim's Progress.  
*Froissart*.  
*Gregorovius*: Rome.  
*Percy's* Reliques.  
*Euripides*: (Murray's translation).  
                     Bacchæ.  
                     Hippolytus.

*Scott*: Legent of Montrose.

Antiquary.

Guy Mannering.

Rob Roy.

Waverly.

*Cooper*: Two Admirals.

Pilot.

*Dickens*: Pickwick.

Mutual Friend.

*Thackery*: Vanity Fair.

Pendennis.

Then Mrs. Robinson tells of how this famous "Pigskin Library" went through the jungle trails of Africa, back through Europe and home again with this great adventurer and this great reader. It is safe to say that many a hot night Roosevelt went adventuring through books on such quests as even his African trip did not bring him. This was ever his great highway to the worlds; through books.

A proof that this influence of books in his own life was handed down to his children is seen in Kermit Roosevelt's book, "The Happy Hunting Grounds," published by Scribners in which this young Roosevelt devotes an entire chapter to the theme "Two Book-Hunters in South America" meaning himself and Mrs. Kermit Roosevelt. It is a fascinating chapter of how these two found many rare old editions and innumerable first



editions of books for a mere pittance. The love of books was in Kermit's blood because of the great place that books had in the life of his great father.

Who has not read Roosevelt's own book "A Book-Lover's Holidays in The Open" also published by Scribners of New York?

In his introduction to this fascinating book, he says in one paragraph in speaking of the thrill of adventures in many lands:

"He will take books with him as he journeys; for the keenest enjoyment of the wilderness is reserved for him who enjoys also the garnered wisdom of the present and the past."

Books had a great place in the life of Roosevelt just as they did in the Life of Lincoln and just as they do in the lives of all of us who would bulge back the world's horizons; who would gain the keys to a thousand Kingdoms; who would find the Magic Stone that turns the world to gold; for him who would walk amid the stars with God.

Roosevelt is always, in speech and tramp, and story, able to refer to the exact phrase that he wants to illustrate a point. This is because of the place that books had in his abundant life. In the chapter called, "Across the Navajo Desert" he is talking about the Indians and quotes Horace

Greeley's "Overland Journey" extensively to illustrate his point. He is familiar with this book which, as he says, "was published over a half a century ago." Then he quotes a score of books that have been published on the various phases of Indian life. His knowledge of these books appalls one with its spaciousness.

In the chapter on "Ranchlands" he says in one place:

"Lovers of good literature should read the sketches of old-time Argentine life in Hudson's 'El Ombu.' "

And again in this same chapter his knowledge of books flashes forth in a strange way when he says:

"If any Americans have forgotten how our own West in the pioneer days appealed to an observer who was friendly, but who had not the faintest glimmerings of the pioneer spirit, let them read, 'Martin Chuzzlewit.' "

In a chapter called "Across the Andes" he tells of a dinner in the Andes when a strange group made up of a German, a Belgian, a Russian and several Americans got together. They did not seem to have much in common until Mr. Roosevelt got them to talking about books. Then he says:

"After a while we got to talking about books, and it was fairly startling to see the way that polyglot assemblage brightened when the subject was introduced, and the extraordinary variety of its tastes in good literature. The men began eagerly to speak about and to quote their favorite authors—Cervantes, Lope de Vega, Camoens, Molière, Shakespeare, Virgil and the Greek dramatics. Our host quoted from the 'Nibelungenlied' and from Homer, and at least two-thirds of the men at the table seemed to have dozens of authors at their tongue's ends. But it was the Italian carpenter who capped the climax, for when we touched on Dante he became almost inspired and repeated passage after passage, the majesty and sonorous cadence of the lines thrilling him so that his listeners were almost as much moved as he was. We sat thus for an hour—an unexpected type of Kaffe Klatsch for such an outpost of civilization."

No lover of books should be without this book of Roosevelt's. In its pages there is an entire chapter called "Books for Holidays" and it pulsates with that charm which every book lover likes to find.

This great American tells in one paragraph of a list of books that he had been reading that particular month:

"Guy Mannering," "The Antiquary," "Pendennis," "Vanity Fair," "Our Mutual Friend,"

"Pickwick Papers," "Fortunes of Nigel," "Esmond," "The Old Curiosity Shop" make up the month's list.

He explains in the following paragraphs when he gets his reading accomplished:

"I almost always read a good deal in the evenings; and if the rest of the evening is occupied I can at least get half an hour before going to bed. But all kinds of odd moments turn up during the day in which it is possible to enjoy a book; and then there are rainy afternoons in the country in Autumn, and stormy days in Winter, when one's work outdoors is finished and after wet clothes have been changed for dry, the rocking-chair in front of the open wood-fire simply demands an accompanying book."

"Railway and steamboat journeys were, of course, predestined through the ages as aids to the enjoyment of reading. I have always taken books with me when on hunting and exploring trips.—"

"Then, if one is worried by all kinds of men and events—during critical periods in administration, or at national conventions, or during congressional investigations, or in hard-fought political campaigns—it is the greatest relief and unalloyed delight to take up some really good, some really énthralling book—Tacitus, Thucydides, Herodotus, Polybius, or Goethe, Keats, Gray, or

Lowell—and lose all memory of everything grimy, and of the baseness that must be parried or conquered.”

The Roosevelt literature like the Lincoln literature is divided into three parts: Literature that he read which is a great bulging library in itself that runs from boyhood to death; the Literature that he wrote and created; which in itself is no small contribution to the world's storehouse of American history and American life of his day; and now, since his death; as in the case of Lincoln, we are in the midst of that vast and growing Library of Literature ABOUT Roosevelt. It is all fascinating reading and he who would know Roosevelt must read as much of each as possible; especially the literature that Roosevelt wrote and the literature that loving hands and hearts have penned about his great good life.

## **XII: THE PLEASURE OF READING**

### **BLAZONING MY SCUTCHEON**

**"Ah, my soul, hast thou learned the lure of the book, and hast thou learned what a book is as a delight, and hast thou learned, not as the scholar reads, to get to be great, nor to read as the egotist reads, to be thought wise, but hast thou read as God would read, to catch good and, to see far, and, to learn to live, and, to blazon thy scutcheon with the radiance of the morning light?"**

***Books as a Delight*, BISHOP WILLIAM A. QUAYLE.**

## CHAPTER XII

### *The Pleasure of Reading*

#### A STREAM OF BOOKS THROUGH THE LIFE WE LIVE

"It used to be that we talked about a mountain of books piling up each year but these days we'll have to talk in figures of a stream of books," said a Book Friend one evening as we sat talking of what Dr. Lynn Harold Hough calls in his beautiful exposition of books "The Inevitable Book."

"Well, that figure is all right if you get the right stream," I replied.

Yes, it is true that there flows through the arid deserts of life stream after stream of books. There is the Stream of Scientific Books, the Stream of Text Books for school, the Stream of Travel Books, the Stream of Fiction, the Stream of Nature Books, the Stream of War Literature which is fast subsiding, the Stream of Books for Children, the Stream of books on Philosophy and Psychology, the Stream of Books for boys and girls at their various ages.

"But that is not the use that I want to make



of the figure," said my book friend. "I think of books in a human life in the way that I think of an ever widening stream of beautiful water, flowing through a human life. It is like a beautiful spring at first."

"And that spring is what?" I queried.

"That spring of course is the Bible and Bible stories learned at a mother's knees. I pity the child who does not know this gushing spring from the Bible as the source of all book-knowledge that it has in life."

"Then this Book-Stream widens?"

"Yes, it widens as the years go by. It leaps from that tiny spring in a child's heart until it becomes a mountain brook tossing in hilarious and joyous turbulency down the hillsides of youth; laughing, playing, leaping, loving. It has characteristics just like Youth; has this part of the Book-Stream."

"Therefore, it ought to be fed with books about Youth?" I interjected.

"Yes, it ought to be fed with books about Youth. That is the mistake which so many parents and teachers make; the mistake of trying to impose on Youth the literature of its elders. That is exactly what kills a love for books in the average child-heart. In our schools we try to impose on Youth the cold, classical essays, histories and dramas of literature and the result is

that we kill the desire for books. The Stream of Books in the life of Childhood and Youth ought to flow very simply and naturally, widening as it gets fuller and broader and deeper. No child ought to have imposed upon its life a book that belongs to the full and deep channels of maturity. Even Shakespeare is thrust upon Youth often at too early an age."

The book publishing world today is carefully, scientifically and laboriously trying to build up book lists for every age of Youth. My friend is right. I have had occasion to watch this development of the book publishing business for many years. There is not an age in the life of a child from birth to college that is not provided for by the publishers. Beginning with "Little Prayers for Little Lips" which are for the tiniest of children, through the "Nancy and Nick Books" into the "Grace Harlow at High" books; the Boy Scout and the Girl Scout Series; the various books that are arranged in groups from Babyhood to Youth; we watch that great stream widening and deepening.

The results of this widening stream of books in a life are exactly the results that come from a river flowing through a valley: that river brings fertility of life; beauty in flower and grass and fruit. The life through which flows the stream of books is full of the flowers of information; the

perfume of poise, the green grass of knowledge, and the fruit of love.

To the child that learns to read early in life this stream becomes richer, fuller, deeper, as it onward flows. It is a constant source of inspiration and joy to a human life.

From such a tiny stream the whole wide world is available; for its pathway finally leads to the trails of larger streams, and at last to the wide ways of the seas and at last to the uttermost reaches of the world.

Learning to read books is also a progressive thing like a stream.

First one learns like a child to read by letters.

He laboriously spells out each word letter by letter. It is a slow process but it leads to larger things. The current of this stream flows slowly at first but finally it gets swifter.

The second step in the process of learning to read is to learn to read by words. Most of us read in this way. But the omnivorous reader, the man who astonishes his friends by the number of books that he gets read in a day, reads not by words but by sentences.

This reading by sentences is the next step in the stream of book reading in a human life. One who reads widely and rapidly finally gets to having as a gift that subtle ability to sense the mean-

ing of an entire phrase or sentence without stopping to read every word in it.

"But does he get what is in the sentence as well as that person who reads every word?" I am asked.

"I think he does when he has finally trained himself to read in that rapid fashion. I have known men like Theodore Roosevelt, Bishop William A. Quayle and a score of others who read in that fashion who can tell you anything and everything that is in a book after they have read it; even though they have used this method of getting through a book."

"I have been told that Roosevelt read; not by sentences but by paragraphs," a book friend from New York, Mr. Thomas Willing, said to me one day, as we sat in the National Arts Club. "Roosevelt read a book through in an hour or two and could tell you everything that was in that book. Authors whose books he had read were astonished at the familiarity that he manifested. Even the most subtle meanings that they expected only the few to catch, this great reader had captured in this seemingly casual type of reading. When one is finally trained to it; grows into the method, I am very certain that a man can read as carefully by the paragraph method as he can by the word method. In fact, all busy men who get great numbers of books read have to learn finally to read in this manner."

Mr. Willing is right. I know several preachers whom I call "Book Preachers" because of their intimate knowledge of books and they read at least one book every day of their lives and many times more than a book a day. They must be rapid readers, or paragraph readers, to get this great quantity of reading done.

Mr. Willing, in speaking of Mr. Roosevelt through whose life flowed this ever widening and ever deepening stream of books, said "Mr. Roosevelt was a most extraordinary reader, devouring many volumes in little time because of his method of reading to which he had trained himself through the busy years."

A curious illustration, which I have not mentioned in the Roosevelt Chapter, of how the stream of books ran through the life of Roosevelt was told me by Mr. Willing who in turn got the story from Mr. George Putnam of the George R. Putnam Sons. When Roosevelt graduated from college at the age of twenty-two, he decided to go into the book publishing business and so became a partner in Putnam Sons. He continued this partnership until he took the trip to Africa and gave his African manuscript to Charles Scribners Sons. At that time he severed his relationship with Putnams.

Mr. George Haven Putnam tells of how Roosevelt, whose desk was next to his became interested

in politics soon after taking up the publishing business.

He would come into the office and begin talking politics. He would take up half of a morning in this manner and his enthusiasm was so contagious that half of the office force would stop work to listen to him.

Roosevelt lived in a district where a republican nomination was equal to an election and finally Mr. Putnam, though a Democrat, suggested to his Republican friends that they elect Roosevelt as an Assemblyman. He was sent to the Assembly in his 22nd year and immediately did notable work in that capacity.

This gave the Putnam Company a chance to think of something beside politics for when Roosevelt was around talking politics he was irresistible to the whole office. He had to be in the Assembly for five days a week, and as Mr. Putnam says, "That gave us a chance to be free five days a week to attend to the publishing business."

So it is that the stream of books flowed through the life of this great man, widening and deepening as the years went by. Not only the reading end of books, and the writing end but also the publishing end. And, as I have shown in the chapter on Roosevelt, in later years, or since his death, there is also a great and an ever widening crystal stream

of books written by others about him, flowing through the land.

This stream of books in a human life serves many purposes. It serves the needful purpose of pleasure. Some of the finest things that a river is for are to swim in and skate on, and row on. It is a pleasure vehicle. It enriches life to this extent. I remember as a boy floating down the beautiful Ohio, since become famous in song. It was the highway of my most beautiful joys in youth. Down its broad surface I floated by noon-day, sunlight and by night's beautiful moon-paths.

So book reading is first of all a joy and a recreation.

Most great readers read for recreation.

Bishop William A. Quayle, one of the most voluminous readers that I know, has a beautiful book called "Books as a Delight." Bishop Quayle starts this book off with a startling sentence:

"What we need is not so much information as inspiration."

That is the text of his book. It is that people should read as a mere pleasure. He says that books will:

"Carry me out into the spacious places where stars lift their light of evenings and where mornings have their wasteless splendors and where souls grow great and sublime."

In one of his beautiful passages of appreciation of books as a mere and a sheer delight he sings:

“Books as a delight!

“Things that woo you and lure you. If anybody can get a book in his hand that does not appertain to his business, that is worth while. The love of a good book because it is a book, and the holding of a book in the hand to warm the hand instead of putting the hand to the fire; a going around where books beautiful are, just the loving of a book; not because it is of any use or because it has any bearing on our business, nor because we should be informed by it, nor reformed by it, nor deformed by it, but because it touches our life, and so we might be other than we are.”

This great soul shows what a River of Books flowing through a human life will do to it, and for it, in the last paragraphs, of his appreciation of books:

“I hear the voices calling. They make a skyline from beside me and before me, calling and calling. What voices are calling? Oh, the voices of the books, and the dead men that refuse to die, and the Miltons that were blind and still kept on seeing, and the men on whose lips Death put his burly hand and they paid no attention to his hand, but spoke through it—those immortal folks, some of them living now, some of them dead long since, but living yet.

“And to be answerable to them, responsive to



them, on friendly terms with them, so that they are as near to us as members of our own household, friend, forgive me if I call that culture."

You are forgiven, great brawny Bishop Quayle, Book Lover and Man Lover! You are forgiven, seventy times seven.

That this Stream of Books is a stream of Pleasure, pure and undefiled like the beautiful Cheat River of the Allegheny mountains, is attested by many a volume. Among these is a book by Dr. Lynn Harold Hough called "The Lure of Books."

He tells the reason why books are worth while as mere pleasure:

"The first thing about books is just that they take us out of ourselves."

Then he tells of another great boon that books give:

"Second, when a man of books sits in his library, he is not alone."

This stream has its canoes of pleasure, its Winter days of skating and sport; its Summer nights of moonlight; its talk of love and young lovers; its dew-wet lips of romance; its pulsing hearts of love and laughter; its high noon of high hopes in mid-youth; its wandering winds of wist-

ful wide landscapes; its hot-breathed hours of ambition and ideals; shall we not let it flow through our lives and through the lives of those we love, with its beauty and its pleasure.

True enough this Stream of Books will bring us something of life in addition to pleasure. On its broad surface we shall float our dreams to their practical destinations. There shall be huge barges of books there; technical books; school books; books that we use in our professions, and our trades. The stream shall bring us these.

On that wide stream there shall be the pathway to high success with its attending material and spiritual rewards. The Stream of Books in a human life always brings the practical things such as corn and wheat, turning wheels of commerce; power of waterfalls; lighted highways where we go. Alongside the Stream of Books, new villages and cities shall spring up in our souls; and far lands shall become near to us though we travel not far from our own hearthfires. The Stream of Books shall link us with the wide world and with the great souls and with every nation on the earth; and every race and kind of people; with every adventure that the world affords; and every clanking sword and every thundering voice of eloquence.

We shall read for pleasure.

We shall read for profit.

We shall read for Professional purposes.

The Stream of Books shall bring us profit.

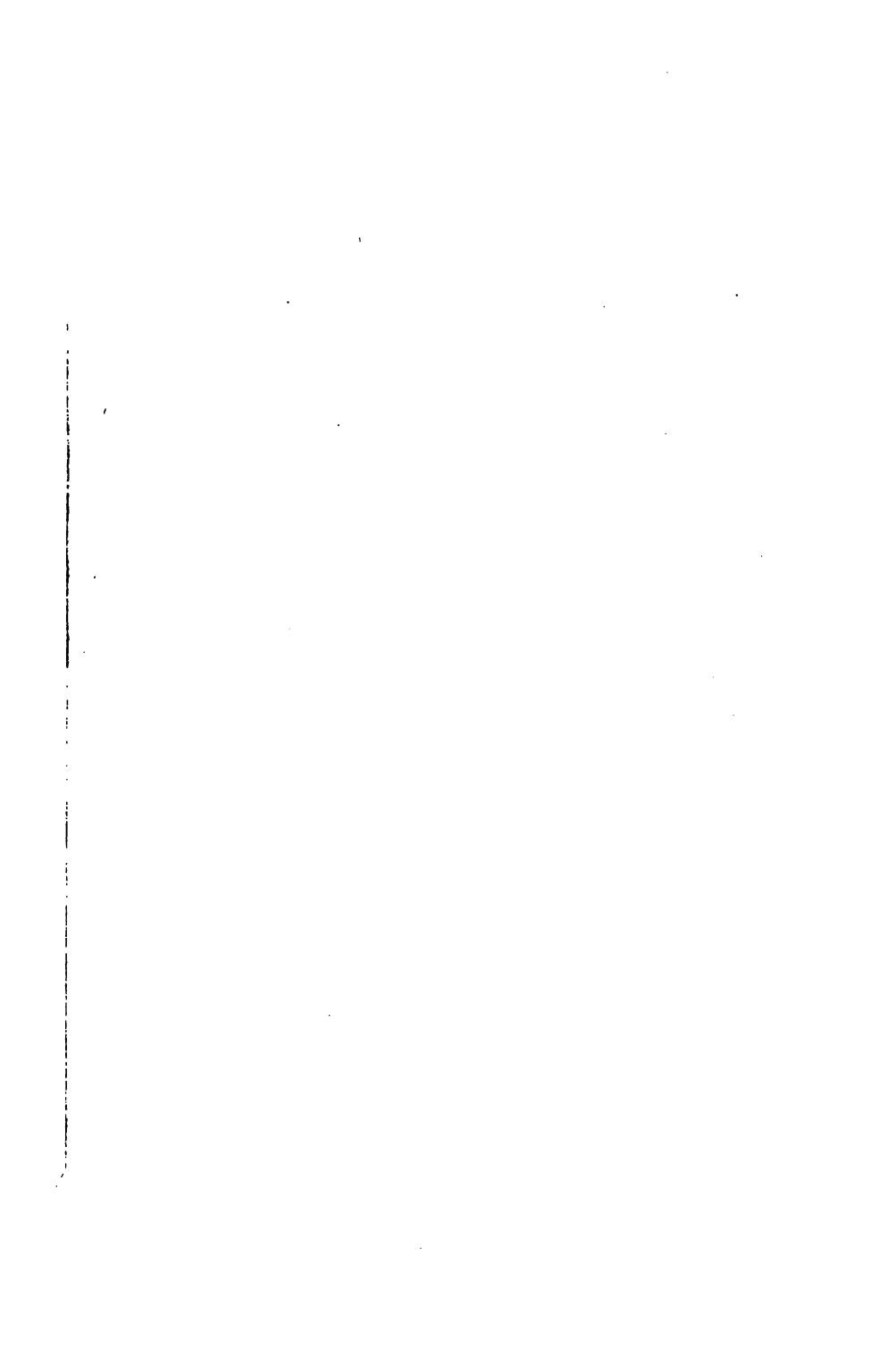
The Stream of Books shall bring us Professional  
Prerequisites.

The Stream of Books shall bring us mere and  
sheer Pleasure.

And the greatest of these is Pleasure.

THE END







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